

AT THE ACTORS' BOARDING HOUSE

AND OTHER STORIES

BY
HELEN GREEN

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Author of "Out With the Brass Band," "One Night Stands," Etc.



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THE HONEYMOON OF SAM AND CAROLINE.

whole week, with every romantic damsel in the place hanging around the theatre, and cadging the price of a seat from mother, under some pretense or other? It wasn't every girl who could cop out the leader of a show which in its youth had played a season on Broadway, and was all to the good even now. And Sam was a pretty good sort, too.

He'd been mooning around all the way from the Coast, about a certain little party back East, until everybody was sick and tired of him.

And now Caroline was Mrs. Sam, and just crazy to know all about "the business." She said they'd go where Sam had lived before, and not to any pokey old place.

The actors' boarding house for hers, and Sam, dubious at first—he lived in 'em a long time—finally agreed although reason warned him not to do it. In the shade of the jumpy gas jet, Mrs. de Shine shook Sam's hand.

"Yuh done finne," said she, heartily. "An' all I hope is that Mis' Smith don't find out the kind of guy yuh really are. Wait'll we all git together, Mis' Smith, an' we won't do a thing tuh him!"

Caroline was puzzled. Sam had sworn that his past was on open book, and here right off the jump, some one was ready to bust up a happy home.

"She's only kidding," said Sam, uneasily, nudging his wife. "Say, how about the two rooms? Get my letter?" Mrs. de Shine told them about the mean man who wouldn't get out. It was nearly midnight, and they were tired. Any old thing would do until morning, when all should be framed up properly. Sam's show had seven weeks booked around New York, and he'd be living like a regular person, instead of in his Taylor, this trip.

A man came hurriedly in, bearing a tin pail, as they stood in the hall.

"Jimmy!" shouted the boss. "I told yuh boys onct yuh couldn't rush no duck in this house! Take that out a' here this minnit, an' then I want tuh see yuh!"

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The very idee!" Abashed, Jimmy slunk out again, bearing the growler, as the boss led the way to the bridal suite.

"The bath's jest around this hall," she said. "Of course, it looks very plain now in here, but when this bed's out, an that old grouch in the back room vamps, we'll have a grand little soot fur yuh. I know yuh'll like it. I set a good table, ef I do say it myself, as Sam knows. He oughter, with him an' Daisy livin' here off an' on fur six years, when"——

She stopped. Even she could feel the chill in the silence.

"Daisy?" repeated Sam's new wife. "Daisy who?"

"Why, his fust wife, dear," returned Mrs. de Shine, sociably. "An' after they quit, Sam kep' a comin' here, 'cause it was like home. Didn't yuh, Sam?"

"Yes," muttered Sam hoarsely, adding privately, "I hope she chokes, the old fool!"

Mrs. de Shine explained the freezing feel of the air to Caroline, who scarcely seemed to hear the good lady. The furnace man was off on a souse again, and he'd just put the heat on the fritz for fair, and what with vaudeville people, a drama and a burlesque troop all getting in early Sunday morning, she didn't know if she was afoot or horseback.

"I was onct in the perfession, too, dear," she observed. "Ast any one about Maggie Mooney, who done the fust livin' pitchers in bronze at the old California Theatre in San Fran. That was me, an' I'm there with the shape even now. Yuh can't tell with these old duds on a' course. Well good-night. Breakfast's till nine thutty. S'long, Sam, ef she beats yuh holler fur help. I'm allus kiddin', dear, 'cause I'm cheerful."

She closed the door and Caroline sat down upon the edge of a lumpy bed. The light was bad, but Sam could see his finish.

"So you were married before?" she remarked politely. "You never told me. Why didn't you?"

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"Honey!" began Sam desperately. It was like this, see? Me and Daisy quit, and she got a divorce. But this is different this time, and I thought——"

But why relate more of this painful interview? Talking low, because of the mean man next door, Sam and his bride hooked up in a battle of words in which each came out frankly and said what they thought. Jimmy, the buck dancer, slinking softly along like the tent-folding Arabs, set down his growler—the boss had gone to bed—and dusted the keyhole with his ear while he listened delightedly to the row inside. It was great.

The sketch team, coming home late from a friend's flat went creaking upward, toward the mysterious gloom of the fourth floor back. The juggler's bull pup barked loudly and angrily from the third floor. Jimmy heard sobs from the bride. He sighed disappointedly. Same old gag; they'd make up, while he had hoped for a good, furniture-smashing row. He took up the growler and joined the Bronxville Comedy Four, impatiently awaiting his arrival on the top floor. All was quiet in the actor's boarding house.

Caroline felt better. The steam was on, and the sun shone in as she dressed. She had read that the sun is always shining on Broadway, and was glad that it took in Irving Place also. The three big trunks, open, had mounds beside them, in which Caroline had searched for various things, and had not found. There was no running water, so Sam took the pitcher and located the bathroom, and returning he reported that the hot water didn't seem to be running.

Caroline started to see for herself. An amiable blonde in a soiled white kimono, directed our heroine to the bathroom. Sam was right. It was a painted tub, dingy in spots where the white had worn off. But the locked door of the room held by the mean man would fix things. "Our bath's in there, of course," she told Sam. She felt beastly, after all that crying last night, and Sam might have had eight wives, could

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she have but connected with a bath of the sort one got at home in Utica.

"That was our bath you just looked at," said Sam sadly. "I knew it would be rotten here, Caroline. They haven't any private baths."

"No baths? No hot water—and yet on the stage, in Sam's own show, were depicted drawing rooms and all that, and people wore swell clothes—some of 'em **MUST** have baths!"

"I'm going to get a piano sent up from Billy Tway's," said Sam suddenly. I need it. Want to finish a couple of songs." That would be nice. Sam should play for her. They could bathe in the wash basin. That bath with the newspapers floating around the bottom should never hold her form.

They went down to breakfast. Caroline took a last look into the mirror, put a bit more powder on her nose, then rustled out sure that no female guest had her beaten on the go-in. That blue dress was a pretty nifty affair.

The frozy blonde and the landlady alone occupied the dining room. They were telling their troubles. The blonde meant to have George pinched unless he paid up his alimony. He was making a hundred a week with his dog act, and she could starve. She took another bite of steak, shaking her peroxided head dismally. Her locks were clasped by curl papers, promising a wealth of curly golden glory later.

"Set right down, I want yuh tuh meet Gertie," greeted the landlady. "She's in the business, too, dear, an' she knowed Daisy, so yuh an' her'll get on great. Emmar, give Mis' Smith the breakfast food."

The blonde smiled wanly. "I was settin' in Ziemer's till all hours, with Holbrook, Brown an' Smudge—the musical act, you know—an' mebbe I ain't feelin' dretful," she confided. "Well, how do yuh like Noo York?"

Caroline said she hardly knew yet, and gave atten-

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tion to Emma. "Steak, poke chops an' ham an' aig," said the slavey swiftly in Caroline's shell-like ear.

"Ham and EGGS," replied Caroline distinctly.

The boss motioned the slavey to her side.

"If she wants two, she kin have 'em, Emmar," she said in a whisper. "Fur this onct. I want her tuh like it here."

Caroline endeavored to retain an air of hauteur. She disliked the blonde's familiar manners, and on such short acquaintance. But she couldn't speak to Sam without the two friendly ladies overhearing. Hungrily, the bridal pair scraped up the last bite of fried sawdust and thin milk, filling up on bread while the ham was being prepared.

They could hear it frying noisily in the kitchen, and shortly Emma arrived with two plates. There were two eggs for the favored bride, one for Sam. Under the eggs nestled coily an inch or so of true Fourteenth street ham. It was hard and brittle, and good for the teeth. The coffee was the kind that seems to linger with one. You can't lose the taste of it, and so drink a little more, just to see if it's really as bad as it seemed at first, or if perchance 'twas but a horrid fancy.

"Well, can you stand it, baby?" asked Sam, as they re-entered the bridal suite. Caroline pouted a little. But said she was game.

The burlesque ladies in the next room called, after Sam had gone out. Caroline was helping the boss and the slavey to make beautiful her home. The mean man had gone; the bedroom he had vacated was a dark little room, with a cheery view of an air shaft, and seven empty peroxide bottles upon the window sill, left by a former female occupant.

The burlesque ladies were chatty. They were "good fellows," too, but Caroline regarded them suspiciously. Nice girls wouldn't show their—well, their legs!—in tights.

"I ain't buttin' in," said Margie, the fat one. "But

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take a tip from me, my dear. You're young, an' you just watch that Sam like you would a serpent. Them men is all the same, Ain't they, Minnie?"

"It's the Gawd's truth," said Minnie, solemnly. "She knows, an' her with three husbands. Sam's other wife, Flossie, was in the same company."

Fine for Sam. They fixed it for him in great shape. Caroline opened her innocent heart, and told 'em about Daisy. Where did Flossie come in?"

"Listen, my dear, them piano players is like sailors—a gell in every town! Oh, they're the clips. But that ain't sayin' he ain't on the level with you, 'cause since he got this job as leader he's been all right—and, anyway, them marriages was a good while ago."

Fortunately, the girls had to get across to the Dewey for a matinee, or Sam's hearthstone might have been devastated completely. Caroline went out for a walk, wondering if all the folks would know it was Sam Smith's wife. In her absence, four large gentlemen brought the piano, which took up most of the space in the sitting-room. She and Sam seated at it, laboring at a melody to fit a set of words. Caroline orated on the subject of Flossie, and Sam let the song go. Finally, Caroline did a property faint staggering into the gloomy depths of the chilly bedroom, but Sam, with all his experience, wouldn't call.

Cruelly, the cold-hearted wretch went back to the piano. Caroline, listening, decided that he intended to play something soft and sweet, to soothe his little bride. "Tum-tum, tumity-tum! No, that's too high," said Sam, out at the piano, and he tried another metre.

"Hell! I've made this two bars too long!"

"Tumity-tum—tum-tum!"

Why, this was maddening, to have that man calmly banging away at his old piano, while she was perhaps dying, for all he cared. She squeezed out two real tears, beginning to thoroughly enjoy her misery.

"Why, hello, Sammy dear!" called out a female voice. "Just heard you were here! Married again,

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eh, you scamp? We was playin' New Orleans, and didn't we run in Maizie, your third wife. Her and her noo husband was on the bill with us at the Orpheum, and I told her"——

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" begged Sam. "Cut those jokes out!"

Too late,

Caroline, a hectic flush upon her fair cheeks, confronted the visitor.

"You tell Maizie"——she began, furiously, but the visitor was hastily scamping down the stairs. Caroline went in earnest, and Sam put in a few minutes at the strongest talk of his career. So she said they would begin life anew; mutual trust, and all that.

"Baby, I love you' Honest Injun, that's no kid. I may have been mixed up foolishly once, but it's all over now. Give us a kiss!" cried Sam.

Caroline forgave him. "How much will you get for the song, dear?" she asked curiously.

Sam considered.

"About twenty down and a royalty," said he. "There goes the bell. We better beat it to the table, or it'll be wait in the hall for ours!"

Twenty dollars for a song! She had supposed a thousand or even more was the price. What a nasty, hateful old world was this, where nothing was as folks back in Utica thought. They supposed her at this moment costly domiciled at the St. Wreckus.

She sat between Sam and the Property Man, who had boarded there a long while. He ate very rapidly, and renewed supplies frequently. Something rubbed against Caroline's dress.

It was a lovely little white poodle, the boss' Fido.

"Oh, Sam, isn't he CUTE?" she trilled. A snicker went around the table. Could it be that some human creature approved of the beast whom one and all hated?

"Take him right intuh yer lap, dear, ef yuh want to," said Mrs. de Shine, encouragingly. "I just know

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yuh'll love my baby Fido. Give the nice lady a kiss, Fido!"

"Cut it out!" roared Sam. "Cuss it all! my wife don't want dogs around at dinner!"

Mrs. de Shine glanced at him reproachfully. "Yer fourth wife, Birdie Harrington that was, now Mis' John Spencer, of Spencer, Harrington & Jones—she liked dawgs, Sam Smith," said she. "But a' course, soot yuhself. Have some pitattas, Mis' Smith, they'll hearten yuh up. I guess yuh got yer own troubles."

Caroline's smartly coiffured blonde head buzzed with this new horror.

Another wife! Oh, the Mormon, or if not a real one, just as bad

"I will have some steak," she said, unsteadily, to the attentive Emma.

The buck dancer's wife kicked the soubrette under the table.

"She'll hand it to him before he goes to the show-shop," she observed. "Tell the girls to keep it up. Ain't it fun?"

Sam ate nothing. He wasn't hungry, and finally, with the boarders frankly viewing Caroline's old gold silk, donned just to let the actress see how the smart set dressed in Utica, he and Caroline went upstairs.

"It's a darned lie, all of it, except Flossie and Maizie!"

"It is eh?" answered his wife. "You left out Daisy. And who did you marry in Seattle in '98? Tell me that, you viper!"

"Who told you that?" stormed Sam, red-faced, and caught with the goods.

"A certain party," replied his wife, firmly. Ye gods! One day in the actors' boarding house, and she had the deadwood on him for keeps!

"I wish I was dead!" sobbed Caroline, ungrammatically.

It was 7.30; time to get to the theatre. It was an unsatisfactory farewell, but the poor must work. Sam

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said a few kind words to various persons congregated in the dark hall as he left.

"I wish a MAN would start it," he said, pointedly. "If he does, he'll need a couple of new eyes and some teeth." Caroline spent the evening sitting on the floor with the tousled blonde, and Mrs. de Shine. The ladies cleaned their diamonds and told tales of their early married life. And they told her not to fret. It was just as well to have something on Sam, and all the ex-wives were married again.

Sam, playing first violin and directing, crabbed the leading woman's best song, and killed the juvenile's solo. He slipped out and had seven drinks with the trap drummer, and felt better before the show ended. It was his own little pet who met him on his return. He came up the stairs with the Three Winstantine Sisters, who merrily shouted goodnight as the door opened.

"Who were those women?" inquired his wife, and Sam thanked Heaven there had been three instead of one.

There was a quart of champagne, sent by Genaro & Bailey, as a wedding gift, and, this Sam proposed they drink. He turned up his coat collar, skated down to Fourteenth street to the restaurant which never closes, there procured four ham sandwiches and a dill pickle, and hustled back to his bride.

They drank from a toothbrush mug and a glass, Sam gallantly helping his wife.

There was a fight outside in the street, and a string of fire engines answering an alarm, and thus entertained the bridal pair, with the cheering grape making life appear a pretty fair proposition after all. agreed once more to let it go at that.

* * * * *

Sam's show was putting on new numbers. He had to stage them, and it took every minute of spare time. Caroline sat at home, writing letters to the folks and

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talking scandal to the show ladies, a fresh lot of whom arrived every Sunday morning at the Maison de Shine.

They tramped heavily up the stairs from five in the morning on, making joyous the happy Sabbath days. The second floor front (Caroline and Sam) lay in their lumpy bed and violently wished that death might overtake the tramping newcomers, but it never did.

Three weeks of the honeymoon were over. Caroline had looked forward to a jolly life, in which each evening would find the leader's wife ensconced in the best box at the show, with company and audience respectfully admiring.

Another fond hope shattered. She'd been in back twice, and had a row with Sam because the ingenue made goo-goo eyes at him during her second song.

"I can't help it, it's only the 'business'!" expostulated Sam. "Great Scott, that's a gag as old as I am, my dear child. Have a little sense. Gee, ain't I home every minute between shows, except when I have to go to Publishers' Row for new stuff?"

"You don't take me up there," argued Caroline. "You mean old thing."

"I don't want you there!" cried Sam, earnestly. "I'll be leading on Broadway soon, and I don't want you with these people. Maybe I'll take my own orchestra out, like Herbert. It ain't such a joke, at that."

"You ought to see my wife," he told the boys on Twenty-eighth street. "Cheerful little soul—yes. But no sittin' up all night under the bright lights for hers. We stay home and play cards. That's the life for me. Great."

They now had three week stands just outside of New York, and Caroline, when Sam invited her to go along, declined. She guessed she'd rather stay behind. He was bit relieved. Now he could put on a certain rollicking number with a lot of catchy business, and teach the chorus without Caroline turning up and threatening to lick a few of the ladies.

And Caroline, at home, while Sam bragged to all and

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sundry about his wife, who was one woman with no wish to bust into the profession, gave heed to the tempter's voice.

The fat ex-burlesque queen did it.

"My dear," said she. "You're wastin' your life. With your face an' figger, you should be headin' a show. Kin you dance at all? No? Tain't hard to learn. I cud put you in the show business in a month. Ain't that right Maggie?"

Mrs. de Shine, who was present—she and Caroline were pals—agreed.

"It's a sin an' a shame!" she declared. "Carry cud be earnin' her little old twenty-five tuh fifty per, as well as not. Gwan an' coach her, May. It'll be a joke on Sam."

The teaching began, and Caroline displayed a shape and talent which neither of the older ladies had suspected.

The "Jolly Masqueraders" were short of girls. Gus Deeves, the manager, had his old room at the boarding house, and his old friend May told, him of her little protegee.

"Thirty a week, my dear boy, from the start, an' she's wuth it," said she.

"Too much," said Mr. Deeves. "Hully gee, I kin git principals for that! Is she good lookin'?"

When he saw Caroline he chortled with managerial joy. "She's a peach—a dream," said he, delightedly. "I'm gettin' away from old burlesque methods. The little, pretty ones fur me—them big battleaxes has had their day. I want clever people. Gimme four more like her, an' a good comedian, and I'll take my show on Broadway."

Between them they engineered Caroline's debut, under the name of Hortense de Trouville. Sam's show returned and took the road again, with Sam sending a fat letter every day. Caroline's were thin ones—two shows a day keep one busy.

In seven weeks she held up the end of the line, and

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could count the house as quickly as the show's treasurer. Then Sam's show went to pieces out in Omaha, and he came East without wiring Caroline.

To Mrs. de Shine, who loved mysteries, had been confined the task of remailing letters from Caroline while her show was out on the Eastern wheel.

The Monday on which Sam returned, the Deeves show opened at the Circle, in dear old New York.

When he burst in, eager to see Caroline, Mrs. de Shine said she'd soon be back. Sam, to kill time, chased uptown to the Circle to see his old friend Deeves.

"Are you working?" queried the latter excitedly. "Gee, it's luck if you ain't! Just lost my musical director; he quits Satiddy. Take the job and I'll throw him out to-day! Fifty a week! You can jump in and do it easy!"

"Sixty-five," said Sam, firmly.

"Aw, come off; that's a Broadway salary, bo," began Mr. Deeves. "Quit kiddin'."

"Sixty-five," repeated Sam.

"Well darn my hide, I guess I am off my nut, but I'm going to take you! There ain't anything too good fur my show. And we'll sign a contract in a minute. That's the way I do business. Quick, and no shilly-shally. Give us your mitt! Wait'll you see my six new women. Elegant!"

They sat in a stage box as the beauties tripped out in the first part. Mr. Deeves smiled as he gazed at the lovely little creature in white tights and gold-braided jacket at one end. And he squinted at Sam out of the corner of his eye. At last Sam looked the vision over. He seemed to be ill.

"I think I'm losing my head, Gus," he said, faintly. "But that one there—the white one—she looks"—He stopped, leaning weakly against his new boss.

"Yes?" said Deeves, with a chuckle, and he gave the white lady the high sign. It so disconcerted her

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that she sang all out of key, and missed six steps, then she fled to the first entrance.

"It—it can't be Caroline," muttered Sam, hoarsely.

"Better go in back and find out," said Mr. Deeves, grinning. "And what's the odds? Won't you be on the road together? She gets a speaking part to-morrow."

Sam stood up. "I can't realize it—it's awful!" he said.

"Drawin' two salaries ain't awful," observed Mr. Deeves, practically. "It was a cinch she'd bust in the business, anyway. They all do. And I'm going to buy you a swell supper to-night, too. That's the kind of guy I am. Why that little trick's the life of the show!"

Sam thought rapidly. "I do believe it's the best thing after all," said he. "And, besides, I'll know where she is."

"You bet," returned Mr. Deeves, wisely. "That's the answer."

The Disastrous Bookmaking of Red-Cheeked Rudolph.

RUDOLPH SPIEGEL was a fine, big German boy. He worked in the Herr Oberdorfer's delicatessen shop, on Avenue A, and young ladies came from blocks away to be waited upon by Rudolph of the whitey hair and red cheeks.

He could slice ham to a paper thinness, and dill pickles and sour, spiced Holland fish tasted better when Rudolph shoveled them into the wooden dishes, savoring the sale with a cheerful grin and a kind word. When business was slack the Herr sat upon a pickle barrel and read the evening paper. Rudolph could not read English well, but he sometimes glanced at the pictures. They were not so amusing as the Annaberg Blatter, which came out at home on a Saturday, with fine colored pictures.

One day a young man called upon the Herr Oberdorfer. "You like buy someding, ja, plees?" asked Rudolph.

"Wanter see the boss!" replied the visitor gruffly. The Herr was weighing corn beef for a lady. He was fat and deliberate in his movements, and hurried for no man. But when he saw the young man he left the beef for Rudolph to tie up and greeted the man excitedly.

"Well, she's in to-morrow," said the young man importantly. Rudolph listened, and he was shocked, for the Herr had a frau, and it was clearly another she to which the man referred.

"So! That is good—fine!" replied the Herr. "You think she win sure? Remember, one time you say dot same ting, und it don't come in."

"It's a pipe," said the young man solemnly. "It's already in. This one'll be 200 to 1, and she'll breeze in on the bit. You put a good bet down, and I'll be in to-morrow after the race for my bit. S'long."

The Frau Oberdorfer was coming from the back of the store. "Rudolph, quiet—she must not know I bet on the races," whispered the boss.

Rudolph nodded. So it was a horse? He knew nothing of betting, but the boss had money, and if he wished to gamble it was his affair. The next day about 2 o'clock the Herr seemed uneasy. The Frau usually took a nap at this hour, but to-day she was not sleepy.

She was making the boss take down and rearrange all the cans and boxes. He got a chance for a private word with Rudolph at last. "You know McNulty's saloon, ja?" he asked, putting some bills into Rudolph's hand. "And the man who buys tongue sandwiches every night, with the black mustache? Ja, you know. You go to him, say I wish to bet upon Shy Ellen, in the third at New Orleans, forty dollars straight. You see?"

Rudolph was already shedding his white apron, and thrusting his large red hands into his mittens. The Herr said it over again in German, and Rudolph said he understood. After he had gone the Frau insisted on learning what the whispering had been about, and she wormed it out of her husband.

But she displayed none of the expected rage. Instead she showed a sporting instinct, and became wildly excited. They would send little Herman to college, and she would have a diamond ring with all that money. The Herr was delighted with her spirit. Eagerly they waited for Rudolph to come back with the winnings.

The young man stopped in at 4:30. "It won!" he exclaimed, exultingly. "I'll be back later." The Herr jumped up and down and the Frau gave an extra pickled herring to the pound she was measuring for a customer. What a fine land was America!! And where was Rudolph?

The Herr said he would go and find the foolish boy.

* * *

As Rudolph was rushing into McNulty's, where the handbook man was, Wilhelmina Dummeldinger stopped him. Wilhelmina and Rudolph were to wed when they had enough in their joint "plant" to furnish a nice flat.

Rudolph showed her the forty dollars. "I go to upon the race make bet, dear heart," said he, fondly, "and when I oudt come yet I shall the much money have." He explained his mission.

Wilhelmina had been born on Avenue A, and she read the dope like all up-to-date persons. Her brother Heinie went every day to the poolroom, and in summer to the racetrack. "What? A long shot like that win?" she queried, contemptuously. "He has no chance. Wait—let me see."

She drew out a paper, on which was the result of Brother Heinie's own successful system. It had bought the turquoise earrings and the garnet breastpin she wore.

It showed Shy Ellen to be a rank outsider. There was no dope on her, because she couldn't run in the mud, and to-day's paper said the track was heavy.

Amazed at her marvelous knowledge, Rudolph listened as she advised him. "For fifty, four, five rooms are furnished grand," said she, wisely. "Here is where we make a book. This one has no chance, an' he has been tipped foolish. We simply hold it out. She can't win."

Rudolph was rather frightened, but Wilhelmina soothed him. He didn't know that to really make a book successfully a bankroll is necessary.

At the proper time she bade him go inside and inquire who won. "Shy Ellen," said the barkeeper, and he wondered what was the matter with the Dutchman.

* * *

It was late at night when Rudolph sneaked into the shop. What followed was too painful to relate. Rudolph, the bond slave, is still working out his debt over

BOOKMAKING OF RED-CHEEKED RUDOLPH.

on Avenue A. Mountains of ham and tons of herring has he sliced and ladled out. He gets no wages, only his board and room, and Wilhelmina has a new fellow. Over the sea lies Germany and peace. But Rudolph will never get back. He owes too much.

Emma, the Slavey, Makes Good in Vaudeville.

EMMA, the slavey, was setting the table for dinner in the actors' boarding house. Just as honest hearts beat 'neath ragged jackets, so does art burst forth in strange environment,

Emma, the slovenly young female who waited upon the guests of Mrs. de Shine, had a musical nature, and she burned with a wild desire to go upon the stage, but none guessed her secret.

As she lazily distributed the plates and table jewelry, Emma beat out a tune upon them with a fork. "Rufus, Rastus John-san Br-hown," she hummed through her nose, "w'ot you gwine to do when the rent co-homes r-hound?"

It sounded well. Pleased, she sang the chorus of this gem loudly, ceasing work entirely, in order to fully enjoy it. There is nothing like music.

The door behind her opened softly as Johnny McDuff came in.

"Evenin', Emma," he said, amiably. Emma stopped caroling.

"Lawsy, Mr. McDuff, you gimme a start!" she exclaimed, spreading a soiled hand over what was supposedly the region of her panting heart. "Gee! I'm shakin' yet! The bell ain't rang, an' Mis' de Shine says you gents gotta keep out till it does."

"That's all right, Emmar, my dear," replied Mr. McDuff, easily. "I seen the butcher boy bringin' in chickens to-day, an' I'm Johnny at the rathole to-night fur some of the white meat, see? I didn't git nothin' but the bone of a laig last time. What is they fur desert?"

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

"Appil and leming pie—but take the leming, 'cause the appil is bum," said Emma, candidly. "She told me not tuh tell, but I will."

"You're a darned good fellar, Emmar," declared Mr. McDuff, heartily. "G'wan with your work. I'll set here quiet, long's I've beat that mob in the hall in. It's snow-in' outside."

Emma placed mounds of bread and dishes of sad looking pickles about the table. She beat out another tune with a stray knife as she arranged these articles.

Mr. McDuff gazed at the flyspecked red handbills from London music halls, which decorated one side of the room. On them flared the names of various American vaudeville teams who lived when in New York at the Maison de Shine. On the dusty mantel stood a row of photographs of ancient and modern variety performers, inscribed with the names of the originals in faded ink,

He had seen these ornaments many a time before, and they did not interest him. Suddenly Mr. McDuff turned and looked searchingly at Emma, who was gracefully ladling out pickled beets for the coming feast. He seemed to be struggling with an idea. At last he sighed as if relieved, and when Emma's substantial form squeezed past him—the dining room was of cramped proportions—he delivered a playful blow upon her husky arm.

"You're a dem nice gal—and that's no dream, kiddo," he remarked.

Emma flashed one coy glance upon him.

"Quit, now!" she cried, coquettishly. "She's ringin' the bell! Here they come!"

Mr. McDuff sank hastily into his chair, tucked a napkin into the top of his waistcoat in businesslike fashion, and laughed mockingly at the fat comedian who had hustled in before the rest, expecting the end seat which Mr. McDuff occupied.

"Git a move on, Emmar! The 'Only a Child Wife' numba two comp'ny's jest come in, an' the folks 'll have to make room fur eight more somehow; they're playin' in Harlem an' gotta eat early."

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

It was Mrs. de Shine, the boss, who spoke.

The Property Man ventured an objection.

"They ain't no more room here," he said, irritably. "My elbows is wore raw now tryin' to eat in this crowd. I won't move no more, and that goes."

"Well, them people is comin' in, Mista Johnson," said the boss, firmly, "an' ef yuh don't like it, yuh kin lump it! I'm runnin' this house, an' they can't nobody start nothin' with me. Move up, or vamp—see?"

The Property Man proceeded to hunch his chair toward the end of the table, muttering sullenly, and the members of the melodrama production trooped in.

"Emmar, when yuh've helped with the dishes, give Fido his bath an' rub in his flea powder when he's dry," commanded the boss when the boarders had begun active work upon their food. "An' tell that song an' dance team in 42 I want their board. They needn't think they kin stall me off."

"Yuh said I could git off tuh-night," objected Emma.

Mr. McDuff overheard her and he noted her mutinous expression.

"That poor gal's worked to death," he observed to his neighbor, the juggler.

"She's a mut," returned the latter. "Our room's kep' fierce. I'm goin' to stop summers else next time we play Noo York, if this joint don't get no better."

Mr. McDuff did not reply. But as he passed out, he smiled upon Emma, who mustered a creditable redness upon her rather muddy cheek. She had a mash!

* * *

Mr. McDuff sat in his small top floor room, his feet on the bed, smoking a bad cigar and looking into the future. It was only 8:30, yet his work for the day was over, but this fact angered rather than pleased him, for he was in vaudeville, and a "three-a-day."

This week he went on immediately after the pictures at the first show, obliged again (in the "supper show") at 5:12, and did his final turn at 7:23. It was an altogether

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

humiliating engagement, and yet he was lucky to have booked the week at all.

Mr. McDuff worked "single" and had a musical act. He sang a couple of parodies, did a bit of comedy, a buck dance, and played upon the cornet, saxaphone, and, of course, the xylophone, that long-suffering instrument. It makes a good front, with a natty velvet table cover under it, and our very best musical acts use it. The matter of playing upon it skilfully is unimportant. You must dress your act.

Mr. McDuff had removed his shoes, collar and tie, and coat, carefully settling the coat over a chair and washing off a spot on the collar hopefully. Laundry work costs money, and he owned but two suits—a stage costume and this one. He now riveted a gloomy look upon his big toe, which protruded from a distressingly large hole in his blue sock.

"That's the way it goes!" he thought, bitterly. "I ain't got no one to mend my socks, nor nothin'. I ain't a hit with the wimmen, an' I dunno why. I ain't a souse. The hull thing's this: The agents won't book a single turn an' pay any money for it. Ef I had a good swell gal for a podner I'd be headlinin' the bills. Now I jest wonder if that Emmar could be licked into shape?"

"She wouldn't have to do much, an' it'd be better'n hookin' up with one of these wise dames who want to run the act. Put a good dress on her, an' they'd be a big difference. She's awful sloppy, though, now."

The humble servant of the Maison de Shine might yet hand the ice pitcher to the proud stage ladies who demanded her services on every trivial pretext—and never tipped her! Who can tell what lies before us?

* * *

Emma, the slavey, sat in the fortune teller's parlor. An odor of dead and gone dinners, mingled with a more recent and stronger fragrance of the healthful cabbage, made the place seem homelike.

The fortune teller had hastily assumed a black kimono,

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

sprinkled with moons and half-moons, symbols, possibly, of her mysterious calling; or, again, the garment may have simply been a lucky bargain.

She held Emma's ample hand loosely, speaking in a low, dramatic voice:

"I could tell you more for another quarter, of course," she observed, regretfully. "There is more—a lot more. And you must beware of a dark woman."

Emma dug for the quarter. She knew well enough the identity of the dark woman. Mrs. de Shine's hair, when the peroxide needed renewing, was black at the roots.

"Is they any chanct of me goin' on the stage?" she inquired, anxiously, "and—and the love part—he's a fair gent."

The seeress regarded Emma's hand searchingly, after she had nailed the hard earned quarter of the working girl.

"Strange—strange," she mused. "I see lights, and music, many people clapping their hands—and gold! You have a wonderful future, my dear. People are fighting to get at you, for you will be a great singer."

Emma's face was wistful. "I never was much at singin'," she said, doubtfully. "Dancin's what I'm crazy about."

The fortune teller looked at the palm again. "It is dancin'," she said, earnestly, "and here—on this line—I see you with a fair man who loves you very much. And a child. You will cross water and make a long journey."

"Does he love me?" queried Emma, bashfully. She was settling for this, and might as well learn as much as possible.

"He does. You will receive a letter from him to-morrow."

Oh! joy, and likewise, bliss. Emma fared forth into the night, back to the dingy boarding house, clacking, even now, in fancy, through the finest buck dance ever seen in vaudeville. Emma yearned not for the gauzy skirts and fleshings of the ballet, or the flimsy draperies of the fire-dancing ladies, but to cop out the championship as the best wooden shoe dancer in the continuous.

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

No wonder filled her pleasantly disturbed mind as to the means of soaring to this pinnacle. The fortune teller had seen it in the hand. It was enough.

She replied amiably to the merry, if none too fresh, jests which greeted her as she passed through the hall, where male performers home from work or "resting" this week, loafed and held argument with one another.

Passing into the dining room, Emma prepared for slumber. Her bed was on the dining table, on which was placed a narrow mattress and some bedding. Thus did the crafty Mrs. de Shine utilize all possible space in her refined home for the profession.

* * *

The next night at dinner Mr. McDuff, when he had spotted Emma, whistled softly in astonishment. She sported a red ribbon about her neck, and a clean gown. And where once none had known where her waist began or left off, Emma's form showed a certain smart curving in at the waist line, which only a straight front corset could produce.

Her Sunday stays would not permit of the absolute freedom of movement which Mr. McDuff called "sloppy," but she was repaid for this by the approving glance which the "fair man"—he had light hair, and it needed cutting—cast in the direction of the waist.

Emma fed the hungry, meekly endured the shrill commands of the boss and the attentions of Fido the poodle, a little brute which joyed in biting persons upon the ankle.

"Hey, Emmar! Take it on the run to the kitchen an' git me s'more meat!" ordered the acrobat, with his accustomed inelegance, and Emma, the flicker of a scornful smile upon her face, obeyed. It was not for long.

And in the mind of Mr. McDuff new thoughts bumped against each other. She had a figure, after all. A front and switch of goodly proportions would make beautiful her head of scanty, ill kept locks. A front! She needed but that and some training. What a funny world it was.

"Thank you, Emmar," he whispered, kindly, as the

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

luscious and nourishing bread pudding succeeded the beef stew.

The simple words sent Emma up in the air, if I may use so common an expression in connection with so sweet a romance. No one had ever thanked her for anything; they merely hollered for more.

After this Emma put on more dog with each succeeding meal. She wore her best shoes and washed her face regularly. But the boarders did not notice the change.

They were too much occupied in telling about their acts, how they had laughed in the face of the manager who offered only a paltry \$300 a week, and knocking absent friends.

The show business is a grand little life.

In the cold, gray dawn of a Sunday morning which somehow seems a bit more gray on Irving place, the landlady entered the dining room to arouse her tardy slave.

"Git up, Emmar!" she shouted. "People due on every train what's gettin' in fur next week, an' yuh sleepin' like the dead!"

The dreary ticking of the Geston Sisters' cuckoo clock, left in lieu of currency for two weeks' board the month before, replied, but the hoarse, protesting mumble of Emma would never issue from her hard couch more—not if Emma kept her health and did well.

She had gone. Investigation showed it, and Mrs. de Shine received the incoming vaudeville drama and burlesque hordes alone, but with the grace which has made her name famous in the profession.

"Whadda yuh thinka that ungrateful hussy?" she said, to Railey & Boston, the acrobatic team, just in off the big circuit. These gentlemen were privileged, and they sat in the busy kitchen as Mrs. de Shine told her troubles.

"What made her quit, Maggie?" inquired Mr. Boston, meditatively nibbling at a doughnut.

"Heaving knows, Freddie!" declared Mrs. de Shine. "She had all heart c'ud a' wisht fur an' treated like a queen. But them common trash is all the same. I don't wish her no harm, but I suttently do hope she breaks a laig.

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An' Johnny McDuff's mushed without puttin' sumpin' in my mitt, too. I ain't got nothin' but worry, an' yet I'm a good fella, an' treat everybody good. My heart's the biggest part of me."

"That's right," agreed Mr. Railey. "Kin you lemme take a couple o' bucks till Satiddy? We gets here kind of short."

"Well, I s'pose I kin," said Mrs. de Shine, thoughtfully, and she brought up from her stocking a huge roll, from which she peeled the price of her audience's attention. It is hard when one must pay them.

And where was Emma? Alas! where?

* * *

It was about twelve months later, and the boarders were gathered about the bountiful board of the Maison de Shine. Jimmy Owens, leader of the Gay Parisian Milliners Burlesquers, addressed the burlesque manager.

"You were looking for a swell act for next season," said he. "Well, George, here's one. Slammem & Bunk, man an' woman it is, an' a fella was tellin' me they're the greatest act in the business. Do a xylophone duet that's a winner, an' play a bunch of things. If we had a good act to head the olio, an' this guy said they could play parts, it'd be worth while givin' that bum quartette we got the boost. They're fierce."

The manager laughed. "You don't want much, Jim," he replied. "I know who them people are. Three hundred a week, that's all they git. I kin keep the quartette for \$125."

Conversation turned upon this high salaried turn.

"Well, they dress it swell, with gold plated instruments and her in evenin' clothes and a bunch of ice on her hands, and of course it goes big," remarked the Coon Shouter, enviously. "Gimme a bunch of coin, and put me in the houses they play, and I'll be there, too."

"They're both good musicians," objected the Property Man. "Our stage manager ketched 'em in Boston, an' he told the old man about it. They're booked to our house next week."

"Toppin' the bill, eh?" sighed Vera Slasher, who with the aid of her Pickaninnies is the big screech of so many programmes. "Well, yuh gotta have pull tuh do it. Ef I cud git the agents tuh lemme put on my new act, I'd cop the change, too, but ef yuh can't hand them robbers a ten-spot every trip yuh ast fur time, they won't give yuh a pleasant look."

"I was up tuh Morris', an' seen some of Slammen & Bunk's time. Booked solid tuh May, an' then the Moss-Stall tour, an' eight weeks in London," said the Novelty Juggler. "I dunno how they do it. You can't git no chanct here with an act like mine. It's over their heads, anyway. Whatever become of the gal what ust tuh wait on table? I furgit her name."

"Emmar," replied the Property Man. "I dunno where she blowed to. I'd like a cuppa cawfee."

The landladly, unchanged, except that she wore a new blonde "front," smartly arranged because she was going out later, entered, waving a telegram.

"Listen, here," she began, vivaciously, and read: "Hold two best rooms, first floor front; also rooms for maid, valet and property man. Arrive to-morrow. Slammer & Bunk, Poli's, Hartford."

"We was just talking about 'em," observed Mr. Owens, interestedly. "Maid and valet! Hully gee! but musical acts are getting uppity. It's the only way to live, though." This was unfortunate, for it gave Mrs. Owens an opportunity to be heard.

"If you'd quit playin' the horses, we might be summon, too!" she said, acidly, and Mr. Owens said no more.

"Well, them knockers what said I was hittin' the to-boggan better make a new book," said the boss, happily. "I guess it's poor when them kind of folks stops here. Susy! Git them curtains up in them rooms an' put three towels in there. I'll show 'em the Waldoff ain't got nothin' on Maggie de Shine. How's the mince pie, folks? It was made tuh home, here, an' it oughta be grand. They's real raisins in it."

EMMA, THE SLAVEY MAKES GOOD.

She went off to prepare for the reception of the coming guests.

It was in the bright sunlight of a Sunday morning that Slammen & Bunk came back to dear old Fourteenth street. It was still there. On the corners stood the same actor gentlemen, prattling of their affairs, and as the cab which held these classy vaudevillians clattered around the corner into Irving place a man came out of a saloon with a bucket filled with frothy liquid and walked up the street.

Mrs. Slammen—Miss Evangeline Bunk in public life, player of the largest saxophone the world has ever known—looked out delightedly.

"It ain't changed a mite, Johnny," she said, waving a hand heavy with jewels. "Pipe the geezer rushin' the duck? Dear old Noo York! Well, we're gettin' back with bells on!"

"I guess our wardrobes'll make them mutts set up an' take notice," replied her husband, settling an inch of sparkling diamond horseshoe more surely in his well tied four-in-hand. "I don't mind spendin' a week's salary makin' a front, either. We kin make it up later."

"D'yuh 'member the forchun teller said I was goin' to cross water?" demanded Mrs. Slammen, animatedly, "an' here we're goin' to Yurup. Them wimmen knows. We're here."

The act's property man, drilled for the occasion, hopped down from the box, assisting his employers to alight. The maid and valet drove up in another cab. Inside the actors' boarding house the noses of a dozen curious guests were pressed against the windows. The big act had arrived.

Mrs. de Shine herself rushed out upon the steps. "Come right in, the rooms is ready, an' so's lunch," she cried.

The lady in velvet and sables looked up.

"EMMAR!" shrieked the boss, "AND JOHNNY M'DUFF! Are—are yuh Slammen & Bunk?"

Mrs. Slammen held out her jeweled hand cordially.

"Put it there, old sport," said she. "We are!"

The Doings of an Amateur Valet.

TERENCE MULLIGAN had been working for his new employer ten days. When, upon awaking after a prolonged drunk, St. John Castleton, all around rounder and international sport, found that during the previous evening's gaieties he had hired Mr. Mulligan, from Avenue A, he was, to say the least, astonished.

But Terence, who could drive a truck if he couldn't tell an orchid from a Lawson pink when the boss sent him to the florist, had made good.

Castleton's friends were wont to come around and listen to Terence's East Side accent with the utmost enjoyment. Castleton found himself in demand at dinners, where once he had been voted rawther a bore, y'enow, for being rich doesn't always mean that the wealthy one is clever, also. And all he had to do was to accurately report the sayings and weird doings of Terence, whose struggles with the proper equipment of a gentleman were very comical.

At first it was a bit annoying to have Terence persistently polish the boots, and then, scorning the use of silly soap and water, proceed to do battle with the \$3,000 black pearl studs which went into his master's evening shirt. But after the roars of laughter from the crowd dining on the terrace at Sherry's, when he rather ruefully narrated the startling fact that he'd actually been obliged, for the first time in years (he didn't mention that formerly he knew how well enough, but everybody knows old man Castleton wore a red shirt and wielded a pick with the other lucky ones out 'Frisco way in early days, and wouldnt' have worn a biled shirt if he'd had one) to get

THE DOINGS OF AN AMATEUR VALET.

out a shirt minus the print of Terence's stubby fingers, and fix it himself, he swore it was worth an increased laundry bill.

Terence, however, rapidly soaked in knowledge, and in four days the scandals of our set were as an open book to him. And for their scandals he had as much contempt as if he'd been a regular valet, and not a volunteer. Especially did Terence glance with an air of disfavor upon the ladies who came to afternoon tea or to late suppers with "the boss."

"Aw, them skoits is dopes, on the dead level," said Terence to the gang in front of Flannery's, over on Avenue A, one night. "They ain't got no git-up-an'-git tuh 'em. Swell Fift' Avenoo babies, they is, too, an' when they's comin', it's me tuh the jooler's an' the flower place, an' buy a bale uv roses and them t'ings what'd keep youse a mont', ef youse had the price!"

"An' is the dames all framed up in decollaty rags, like the gals in the boilesque at Miner's?" inquired Muggsy Murphy, from the flour mill, with deep interest.

"Hully chee, youse'd t'ink a train o' cars is comin' when they comes in rustlin' wit' their smellers up in the air!" returned Terence.

The gang listened respectfully to the traveller returned from a strange world where no one worked, with nothing to do but dress, eat, drink, gossip and ride in autos.

"Gee, I guess that guy y'r workin' fur dunno where he'll sleep, wit' his roll!" exclaimed Mickey Donohue, admiringly, "and how many soots has he? Tell it again, I only just come." So Terence bragged of the one hundred suits and the forty pairs of shoes and the thirty trunks of which he was the proud custodian.

"An' what does them blokies talk about when they're havin' their chuck?" asked Mickey. "Sure, I'll bet fi'pence they wouldn't dig intuh a plate uv ham an'—in forty years, eh, Jerry?"

"Aw, truffles an' allygator pears an' fish cooked on boards an' boids an' t'ings is what they eats," said Terence.

THE DOINGS OF AN AMATEUR VALET.

"An' talking—why, they're just like us fellies an' their goils, kiddin' an' laffin'."

"Ain't the boss got no ladi fren wit' all his coin?" came from the group.

"Sure!" returned Terence. "An' she's a peach. Hully chee, I got tuh screw me nut!"

Wildly he tore across the street, swung aboard a passing car and waved a hasty good-by to his wondering pals. The "peach" was coming to dine quietly, and minus a chaperon, with the boss, and Terence was slated for picket duty during her visit. For the peach had a husband, who looked on Mr. Castleton as his very good friend (as, of course, the latter was), and it was just possible that he might not approve of the peach dining out under such circumstances.

The peach was cautiously emerging from a cab as Terence arrived. He lingered to give the telephone boy orders to allow no person to come up, while the elevator whisked the peach up to the third floor.

"Terence!" called the boss. "Go to the door and stop that ringing! Mind, admit no one."

"I'm hep," said Terence, briefly, feeling in his pocket for the short billy which had won him so many scraps over on "the Avenoo."

"Is Mr. Castleton in? I must see him at once!" The voice caused the peach to stifle a scream with her napkin. Mr. Castleton shivered. The peach's husband was a handy lad in a mixup. What had sent him here?

"In there, quick!" he whispered, and the peach ducked into the bedroom. "My wife! She's here! I saw her come in!" The visitor had brushed past Terence and faced Castleton.

"You lie!" roared Castleton, boldly, and then they clinched. Terence disappeared.

There was a frightful, deafening report, which shook the room.

THE DOINGS OF AN AMATEUR VALET.

"Explosion!" howled Terence in their ears. "The whole t'ing's blowin' up! Come on for y'r lives!" He dragged at the husband, while smoke filled the eyes of all, and neither of the men saw Terence swiftly guide a vision in pink past and into the hall, whence the elevator shot down the street and safety.

"Old man, I sincerely apologize," said the husband fifteen minutes later. "I guess I'm crazy. And now I'm going home and take my wife out to square my conscience."

"Let it go at that," said Castleton.

"What in heaven's name was that?" he asked, when Terence appeared and reported that the peach had fled homeward.

"Fourt' o' July," said Terence, grinning. "Nawthin' but two cannon crackers, but they put that guy on the bum while her nibs makes a gitaway. What color shirt youse want in the mornin'?"

Allen and Allen Split, But Come Together Again.

"WELL, I do declare, I ain't seen yuh folks in a coon's age! Susy, git numba forty ready fur the Allen', an' git a move on or I'll make yuh wisht yuh had! Where yuh been, Dave?"

Mrs. De Shine, boss of the Irving place boarding house, held out a welcoming hand to both Dave and Daisy Allen. Susy, the slavey, scurried up the stairs, jingling some keys. She assumed a more leisurely gait at the second floor, where the landlady couldn't see her. At the third she sat upon the top step and gazed downward through the gloom of a late Winter afternoon. If they came up she could hear them.

Daisy spoke first. The old town sure looks good, Mis' De Shine," said she. "Well, we been playin' in a steamboat show down tuh Noo Ohleans an' we done fine. Four shows a day, an' I helped git up the meals fur the company, an' we lived on the boat. An, after Mardi Gras we come East, cause the business was gettin' bum. Wasn't it, Dave?"

"An' we was lonesome, not seein' no performers," put in Dave. "Well, we worked a week in Looneyville, an' two in Saint Looney, an' now we got a week here'n Noo York. I'm a good hustler, an' I'll have the act booked up good in no time."

"Sure yuh will," agreed Mrs. De Shine. "Livin on a boat! Ef that don't beat all! I s'pose you heard that Bill an' Minnie Cartwright quit, an' she's gone back intuh the circus business? Well, I knowed they wudn't last, with his goin's on."

ALLENS SPLIT, BUT COME TOGETHER AGAIN.

"An' they've split!" said Daisy, in pleased wonder. "He was the hull act, anyway. An' she was an awful knocker."

"Say, you folks want to gas a little, so I'll chase down to Fourteenth street an' see the gang, git some cigarettes," remarked Dave, eagerly. The ladies then retired to Mrs. De Shine's own bathroom, where they sat on the edge of the tub and enjoyed a cheerful gossip about all their friends in the show business.

When their hotel trunk came, Daisy got the man to carry it upstairs. Mrs De Shine accompanied her friend to the small and inexpensive room the Allens would occupy, and Daisy got out various programmes and three sheets with their names upon them.

"Yunn, I never do git tired of lookin' at 'em confessed the landlady, "havin' onct been in the purfession myself, my dear. Ah me, them was happy days, but a' course, fur makin' coin, this game has got it beat tuh a whisper. S'lectin is slow sometimes, but I don't get stung very often."

It was easily seen that the landlady was fond of Daisy, for she made Susy fetch a pitcher of hot water from the kitchen, and a piece of pie. "It'll hearten yuh up 'cause I know yer all out," she said, cordially. "Now go right ahead with what yuh got to do. I brung the alchol bottle an' a brush, an' I'm goin' tuh clean my dimings."

Thus eucouraged. Daisy brought forth various grimy handkerchiefs and soiled stockings and socks, and began her modest laundry work. Mrs. De Shine sat on the floor, industriously polishing a handsome collection of gems.

"My! They're swell!" commented Daisy, longingly.

"Yes, an' I'm prevented from showin' em, less'n I'm goin' out with my fren's from uptown," said Mrs. De Shine, sadly. "This here horseshoe was gave tuh me by a suttten party—he was crazy over me, my dear, but he hit the pipe, an' I simply had tuh give him up. Yunno how them people are—an' I bought these

ALLENS SPLIT, BUT COME TOGETHER AGAIN.

here three big rooms when I sold the Harlem boardin' house. It never paid nohow, 'cause performers want tuh be downtown, an' I suttently don't blame 'em. I'd as soon be dead as livin' up there."

"But I never seen you wear 'em," said Daisy, wringing out a chemise, which she hung upon the footboard of the bed to dry.

"Ef I did the boarders never would settle," replied Mrs. De Shine. "I keep puttin' up a poor mouth, an' they think I simply gotta git the coin. This under yer hat, a' course."

"Oh, cert'uly," said Daisy. The Allens opened at a continuous house next day a Monday, and they must be up in time for 10 o'clock rehearsal. Mrs. De Shine proceeded softly downstairs, hoping to pounce upon the lazy Susy loafing. Susy, not aware that the boss was above, was leaning against the roor of Smithers & Biff's room, conversing gaily.

These gentlemen were acrobats, and they had no date to play on this Sunday evening. They were kidding Susy, whose thoughts came none too rapidly to her.

"Mr. Biff!" shouted the landlady, suddenly. "I warned yuh onct before! Susy get down tuh that kitching before I hand you a wallup that'll curl yer hair! Now yuh boys shut yer door an' behave!" she added, as Susy went heavily, but quickly downstairs.

The acrobats promised to be good, and Mr. Smithers sprung a new gag to pacify the boss. The New Jersey Comedy Four were peacefully running over a new ballad in their room, as she turned the light down until only the faintest yellow dot showed where the gas jet was located, and Jimmy Thomas and his wife were quarreling, as usual, in the first floor front. All was well, and Mrs. De Shine went to bed.

* * * * *

The Allens opened the show. Their turn followed the "travel pictures," and they played three shows a

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day. But they were in New York, and that was something. On Monday afternoon the house was half-filled when they came on, an unusual happening.

They took two bows, and went so well that the manager put them ahead two thirty minutes, and gave another act their former humiliating place. "Well, luck fur once," said Dave to Daisy, as they dressed after their short supper show turn. "Him gettin' handed a lemon in that English act, puts us up. If we keep on like this, kiddo, we'll get the real swell bookin'."

"Yes, an' they was three agents in front, too," replied Daisy. joyously. "I'm glad I cleaned up my blue dress an' white coat."

Dave felt good. He had worked well, and introduced a new step into his buck dance. Perhaps success was waiting for them, a real success of the sort that meant a big salary, and notices in the papers. He was tired of being an "also ran" in vaudeville.

Secretly he had always thought that he was the only thing in the act. Daisy was well enough, and she looked quite pretty, but the few steps she did were only "fourflush." She faked on the cornet in their musical finish, and he did most of the work. Looking the future over, it wasn't an impossibility for him to land in musical comedy.

Daisy was very chatty and sociable as she mended his socks and neatly sewed up a rent in the dinner jacket he wore on the stage after the show that night. But, gazing at his talkative wife as she sat in her faded blue kimono, her blondined hair looking most unlovely done up in curl papers, Dave told himself that it was pretty tough for a good man to be tied down to a dead one. And Daisy was happily planning a complete new wardrobe for Dave if they got a hoped-for ten-dollar advance on salary owing to the unexpected hit they scored!

The Property Man, Mrs. De Shine's oldest boarder, liked Daisy, but he didn't care for Dave. "That guy's a slob," said he to Sammy Biff, the acrobat.

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„The gal's all right, and a nice little party but he's got the idee he's a grand affair. If she wasn't in the act to hold it up he'd died at the first show.”

“Him an' me don't speak,” returned Sammy. He didn't say that having suspected Dave of harboring a secret cache of money, he had endeavored to borrow five and been rephised. There was no need of telling all one knew. “He's no good,” he remarked.

“I heard a feller telling this guy how he ought to go get up a big act and cop the coin,” went on the Property Man. “Now, he'd look nice in a swell act, he would! But he was takin' it in like it was on the level. Them kind never do have no sense.”

“That's right. Got a cigarette?” returned Sammy, amiably.

Dave was very quiet all day Wednesday. He had changed his shirt for the night show, an unheard-of extravagance, as, with careful chalking one white shirt usually did duty for several days. Daisy was worried. She hoped no woman had become smitten with her Dave's good looks, and sent him a mash note.

This dressing up was suspicious. But it wasn't a female that he had “slicked up” for. Two strangers were in back that night. The stage manager told Daisy they were a big agent from Twenty-eighth street, and the manager of an uptown vaudeville house. It was after the stage manager had whispered to the pair, and all three had laughed that the agent sought out Dave.

“You got a nice little act,” he observed. “Got any booking?”

Dave's chest measurement increased considerably in the minute during which the agent addressed him. It was pretty easy when agents that most performers couldn't even get a pleasant look from walked up and made that kind of a talk! Daisy hurried to the dressing-room. She was so excited that she could scarcely do her daily gymnastic feat and reach down

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her back to undo the hooks of the oft-cleaned blue costume.

"My dear boy, you're in wrong," said the agent to Dave, as they stood in the greenroom. "You ought to have a big act. One of those girl acts."

"An'—an' if I had one would you—you book me?" Dave was stuttering in his anxiety to hear the great one's answer.

"Why, sure!" said the latter. He found his friend, and nodded a good night to Dave. "Come up and see me when you get it fixed up," he called, jokingly.

The stage manager concealed a grin. "There's a tip for you," he said. "About six gells now, an' you doing the comedy and dancing. That'd be great stuff." The Property Man worked at this house. "Aw, quit kiddin' that lobster," he exclaimed. "He'll about be leavin' that little gal an' tryin' to do it."

"Oh, he ain't that big a fool," replied the stage manager, carelessly. It was no joke to Dave. They had saved three hundred dollars by much pinching, and washing and mending by Daisy. She carried the bankroll, and they had guarded it faithfully.

"You ain't seen your folks in a long time," began Dave, after they had dined and repaired to their room. "S'posin' you was to take a trip up and see 'em?"

"An' what'd become of the act?" cried Daisy. He must be fooling about it. But he wasn't, and finally she understood. "I'm too good fur this game," he said, in rather a shamefaced manner. "Now listen here. I kin take this change we got saved an' get up a swell big act. See?"

"No," answered Daisy, forlornly, "I don't. I see that. But you shan't do it! You shan't, shan't!" She began to cry miserably. "I wisht I was dead!" she sobbed.

"That's right. Turn on the waterworks." Dave's face was very red. He felt mean about it, but why should she cut up this way about it when he was going to make a career with his talent? Women were so

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absurd. "Have some sense!" he urged. They argued until time to report at the theatre, and kept it up at intervals thereafter

The Property Man, carrying a foam-topped growler, discreetly done up in a newspaper, because the landlady had made strict rules on the subject of growler-rushing, stopped on their floor as he mounted upward at midnight

He had seen Dave in the thirst emporium at the corner of Irving Place, and he knew that Daisy was alone. He could hear her choking out her misery in long sobs. "Darn his hide," he thought.

He knocked on the door. After a moment it opened a crack. "Hope I ain't butting in," he greeted cheerily, displaying the growler, "but I heard you laffin an' kinder thought I'd stop an' ast what's the joke? Say, I got three corned beef sandwiches an' a kittle of suds here, an' they won't do you a bit o' good." His smile was a very kindly one.

Daisy figured that he might have really supposed she had given way to mirth instead of tears. She invited him in, because it was lonely staying in a little chilly room. The Property Man left the door ajar and convered in a very loud and friendly tone. He would have no scandal growing out of this visit. He didn't mention Dave. That wasn't etiquette, but he told her tales of the business in the early days of the "Black Crook" until she forgot her woes and laughed in earnest.

"Poor little rat," he thought, as he went upstairs an hour later. "That feller's a bad boy."

In the end Dave had his own way about what he would do. Daisy went home on fifteen dollars of their board, to live in her mother's Boston flat until Dave made money and sent for her. She begged to be one of the chorus he was going to engage. It would save a salary, but Dave said, "No, the girls wouldn't work the same with the boss' wife in it."

He got a hall to rehearse in, and a man to write the

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"business" for the act. The author would get his pay out of the first week's salary.

"I'm no piker. No chorus gells for mine," he said. "Show gells. I'll give em' thirty-five a week, and we'll show the managers we got the goods." There were no salaries to pay during rehearsal, but some of the girls were broke. Dave had ten of them.

"It'll all be paid if you'll let them three board here just till I start off," said he to Mrs. De Shine.

She had become interested from listening to Dave's enthusiastic accounts of the new novelty.

"I shall charge yuh with their bills, then," she returned, "an' they gotta behave like ladies."

Dave's chorus were ex-members of a Broadway musical piece, and they didn't get along with the vaudeville and burlesque people when they all met at meals. Mrs. De Shine had intended to be very friendly.

"I was in the first livin' pictures in bronze at the old Californy Theatre in 'Frisco myself," she said, where-at the young women cackled merrily. They were not aware that their employer had worked his credit to secure lodging for them, and Mrs. De Shine seemed a wonderful joke to these former spear-carriers.

"Whyn't yuh dramatize yuhself an' go intuh vodelle now?" asked the cut-up of the trio.

"I s'pose I'd rather be boardin' fresh hussies who ain't got thutty cents, miss, or missus, whatever yuh are," returned Mrs. De Shine, angrily. "The dear knows yuh look old enough tuh have a family past first shave age!"

"Don't you dare to address us that way!" cried the blondest one.

"Haw! haw!" laughed the Property Man, while the other boarders waited in pleased excitement. There would surely be a mix-up, for Mrs. De Shine would take no sass from any person. But Dave had heard his employees' remark as he entered the room for his his own meal.

It took a lot of squaring, but as the frightened

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chorus ladies agreed to make a public apology the landlady said they could remain. Certain privileges accorded more favored guests were refused in their case. Their gentlemen friends could only see them in the hall, for the landlady informed them that, lacking a chaperon, no visitors could be received in their rooms. As Collins & Burt had the parlor for two weeks, rooms being scarce, the hall room alone remained.

Dave had expended all his ready cash, and still the special sets must be paid for. A music publisher, after much thought, lent him \$150 for a quarter interest in the act. This was a ruinous bargain to Dave, but he was broke, and he had to have money. There were props to be manufactured, and photographs of the comedian and his chorus to be taken for use in the lobbies.

It all cost money, and every man who did work for him made plain the fact that he was "from Missouri" and must have the cash before the goods were turned over. But rehearsals proceeded.

Dave wrote to Daisy to do what she could, and his faithful ex-partner pawned her watch and her two diamond rings. The jewelry had been bought with money saved from many a weary trip through the one night stands. The "stones" had made a front in the act, and Daisy had kept them safe for a long time.

Her mother became interested. The two women read Dave's letter over many times. They began to think, as he did, that the act would win out. But money he wanted for it! Twelve hundred dollars a week! Daisy had never been so intimately associated with hundreds of dollars before, even if they were not yet in real money.

But other performers with big novelties got that much. They had only to "deliver the goods," produce something which was new and startling, and the managers would pay.

Daisy's mother mortgaged the furniture in the flat,

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and sold a lot of things, which, she fibbed, she really didn't need.

The money went to Dave. The act was almost ready when the tailor who made the smart dress suit and the two comedy costumes for his use refused to send them home until the bill was paid. Dave offered him an order on the box-office for the first week's salary, but the tailor smiled scornfully. He had had such orders before.

There was one hope left. There was the fares to pay to Albany—a big agent had booked him there to try it out—and the clothes and the act's property man had to leave his family some money. Dave rapped on the door of Mrs. de Shine's own room. He told his tale.

"You're a good feller, Mis' De Shine, an' you done a lot for me now," he said, imploringly, "but if I kin get a hundred an' fifty I kin pay it back quick. Seems tough for me to bust up now."

"Lemme see," said Mrs. De Shine, reflectively. "Well, I guess I'll let yuh have it. I been up against it, an' though I must say I think Daisy oughta be in it, a' course that ain't none of my business, an' I'm a woman who don't butt in. Outa twelve hundred a week yuh kin pay it back an' have ten-fifty left."

Dave hastily explained about the salary.

"I had to take this week cheap—see?" said he. "The agent'll look us over an' then when we're a hit book us at the salary. Why, it's a regular little musical comedy, you know. It'll be a revelation to 'em. Four changes of costumes, an' the gells all play brass in the finish, dressed in tights an' hussar coats. An' I got a male quartette. I put them in last week. Needed the male voices. It's great—great!"

"But how much will yuh git?" demanded Mrs. De Shine.

"Well, the fust week we git fares up an' back an' hotel expenses," said Dave, uneasily. "I had to do it so they could see the act. But it's only to try it out."

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He added many earnest arguments, and at last Mrs. De Shine dug down into her stocking and produced a roll of yellowbacks which gave forth a pleasant crackling noise. And Dave went out with the needed amount, much elated. He couldn't fail now.

The act opened at a Monday matinee in Albany. Tuesday morning's papers contained the most effusive notices about it. They said that David Allen had given a new kind of comedian to the stage, and that his company was in every way admirable. Four New York agents were there to look it over on Monday night.

"It's good," they told Dave, "but this might be a fluke. Take another trial week in Newark, and then, if she goes, we'll book you solid."

One of the girls had a rich father. She sent him an urgent telegram, and he mailed her a hundred. She lent it to Dave. She was a new recruit to vaudeville. On that they got through to Newark. One more week and they would all have money, when the big salary began.

They were back in New York to play a Sunday night concert in the local house of the circuit to which the Newark theatre belonged, that being in the contract. Monday Dave was at the office of the agent who had bidden him get a feature act. It was he who had booked the two weeks at no salary.

"Well, there isn't any more booking, that's all," said he calmly, when Dave broke through the guards and made his talk.

"But we were a hit!" wailed Dave, despairingly, "and you said——"

"I'm liable to say anything," remarked the agent, coolly, "but I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you \$300 a week, and ten weeks right now.

"Three hundred! Why, it wouldn't pay the salaries let alone the excess, and fares, and me." Dave leaned against the wall. He couldn't see plainly, and his throat hurt.

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"Then you shouldn't have got up such an affair," replied the agent, coldly. "Four people's plenty. You could have got six smart girls for eighteen each, and made money. You're a fool. Better dig up that little girl you used to work with, and can this thing you got. You're crazy."

Dave visited other agents and heard the same thing. Somehow, he got back to the Actors' Boarding House and sneaked upstairs. He lay on the bed in the darkness and cried until the coarse pillow was wet and smelly from the dampened ancient feathers inside. It was all over.

Johnny Hicks, of Barrington & Hicks, the rapid-fire talking act, had heard gossip as he made the rounds of the agents that day, gaily asking, "Got anything for me?" He reported to Mrs. De Shine that he guessed Allen wouldn't be quite so uppity in the future. It was back to the woods for his. The landlady questioned him closely, and after Johnny had gone, she wrote to Daisy.

The Property Man, in whom his old friend had confided, met Daisy at the station. They had a long conversation on the way down on the car. Mrs. De Shine had a little supper ready in the dining-room.

"Get some booze, Mista Johnson—quick!" she cried. "The poor gell's down an' out!"

The Property Man hustled down to Fourteenth street, returning with whisky. They gave Daisy a generous drink of it.

"I knew it!" she said, wiping her reddened eyes, "but if he's all right an' willin' to work with me again we can save up an' pay it all. They'll all git theirs, an' yuh, too."

"Oh, shucks; I've knowed yuh six years, ain't I?" said Mrs. De Shine. "Don't talk foolish. Yuh kin pay when yuh git it. An' don't worry."

It was very late when Daisy went up to their old room. It was stuffy and full of stale cigarette smoke

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when she entered without knocking. Dave knelt by the bed.

"'Tain't no use prayin'," he muttered. 'She'll quit me. I wisht I'd stuck tuh Daisy. I ain't no good."

"Yer mv old Dave!" shouted Daisy. She was beside him on the floor, an instant later, an arm about his neck. Dave looked at her, and dropped his eyes. Hot tears dripped from them. What an idiot he had been to treat this little woman as he had! "I'll be a good boy, hun', he whispered. "Honest, I will."

"Well, then let's git a good night's sleep," said Daisy. "Allen an' Allen is goin' back intuh vodeville to-morrow!"

The Unreality of Realism.

THE party of tenderfoot tourists, chaperoned by Chicago Charlie, gazed about them with an air of intelligent interest. They were finding out things about New Mexico. Three of the lady tenderfeet trotted close beside Charlie, enchanted with his drawl—assumed for the occasion—“studying” him anxiously.

He was a “type.” He told them of his far-away home, among the Gila monsters and the bleaching buffalo bones down on the edge of the dear old Rio Grande, and of how the old folks were waiting there for him. After that he might have had their bank roll to the case dollar. But Charlie didn’t want their money. He was simply taking a cheerful holiday.

He wasn’t a puncher at all, and a polled Angus beef steer or a mild eyed Jersey were all the same to him; yet the tales he spun to the best looker of the lot, of riding night herd on the snoozing cattle, caoling loudly through his lonely vigil, excited her so that she wished passionately to be a cattle queen, instead of a quiet little person in a long-tailed New York gown.

Charlie dealt bank at the Overland saloon nights. He had spotted the sight seeing band as they emerged from a greasy breakfast at the Palace Hotel, two stories high, and the best hostelry in Cuchilla. He was taking a nightcap with the day barkeep of the Overland, after a long night’s play with a bunch of foolish young men from the Circle D outfit, over on the Pecos.

Three of the cattle gents now snored noisily from the sawdust covered floor in the back room, drunk and busted. Charlie was sober, but not sleepy. Feeling jestful, with Johnny the barkeep’s help he pulled off the best yellow

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chapps of one guest, his spurs (gun belt he had none—these were not stage cowboys) and a large red bandanna which the puncher's best girl, up in Las Vegas, had given him.

Hurriedly arraying himself, Charlie added the sombrero of the biggest puncher. He left his own clothes, made to measure in K. C., and his diamonds with the barkeep, then strode out, a joy to the eye. When the pompous old professor, who was out West to personally inspect the early haunts of the storied Aztecs, spied Charlie, he greeted the latter courteously. He figured that life is at best uncertain, and these Western people might draw a gun unexpectedly.

They became very friendly, because Charlie promised to reveal to him the secret of a lost Aztec mine. Science would benefit, and the professor had no objection to connecting with mineral riches. Fate had plainly sent this confiding man to him.

Therefore the professor encouraged Charlie to converse at length, so he prattled artlessly, and much better than if he had really known anything about the matters of which he spoke. It's so easy to lie.

As the morning advanced, Cuchilla grew busy. Prospectors from the hills rode in to renew camp supplies at the general store. A lucky man had found a rich nickel prospect, with cobalt and gold along with it, and others were searching and sweating in the hot sun, working and hoping.

When they came to town they bucked the stud tables and the bank—that was why Charlie had come on from Tonopah on a hurry call from his friend who ran the Overland.

Charlie showed the party everything. Pack trains of burros, off for the hills; the bunch of 'dobe huts on the fringe of the town; the water filled shaft of the abandoned Lost Chance mine, a dead one now.

He pointed out imaginary trails, leading upward into the mountains, over which the Injuns had traveled to and from their hidden stores of gold and silver. He didn't

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say where the Injuns had found this wealth to cache, and the professor's party didn't ask.

It was noon when they came upon a full-blood "blanket" Ute, loafing about on the rickety sidewalk in front of the Overland.

"How?" said he, politely, to which the professor responded with a dignified salute.

Charlie winked expressively at the Ute gentleman, whose left eyelid trembled ever so little in response.

"We're just in time to see this heathen at some of his tricks," whispered Charlie. "He's a reg'lar Aztec, too. Just the breed you're collectin' dope on!"

The Indian paid no more attention to the spectators. He knelt on a creaking board, producing a bit of white chalk and a fifty-cent piece. Then he drew a circle, enclosing it with a square, and inside the circle he made a cross. And without warning he suddenly hid his dark face in his blanket and sobbed dismally.

"He's up against it," remarked Charlie. "He's got to put money in the four corners of that thing he's made or nothin' doin'. It's some junk his folks always done, he says. Let's go away. I wouldn't give him a cent."

"Hold my young friend; you do not understand!" exclaimed the professor. "This is a sacred rite. I have read of it in—well, anyway, I have read of it, I am sure. It has been handed down from the days when Egypt and this continent were one. I have no doubt whatever that the ancient Phœnicians were closely"—

But the Ute had ceased to wail. He looked up. "Must put silver in him," he said, imploringly. "If not, make Great Spirit very mad." He pointed to the sun blazing above them.

The professor began to dig. In the land of the silver dollar coins are plenty.

"This poor creature means that he will offend the Great Spirit by offering a base metal," he said, happily. "Oh, this is splendid—splendid. You see, he is evidently a sun or fire worshipper." He put several quarters into the worshipper's soiled hands.

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The Indian laid them in little piles in three of the spaces.

"He not 'nough," he observed, pointedly. "Him be very mad." The ladies shelled out their silver, adding it to the sacrifices.

"Cigarette? Make him go better," said the Indian, gravely.

The thin young scientist, with a stained finger, handed over a box of Turkish cigarettes, which the Indian kept, after lighting one.

He said queer guttural things to the Great Spirit, waving his arms solemnly toward the sun. Twice he called for fresh supplies, and the professor found two more quarters.

"I haven't any more," he said. "I guess that will be plenty."

"I guess so, too," said the Indian, calmly, scooping up the booty. "So long, boss. Come and see us again!"

The professor had received a rude shock. This Aztec was a con man. But he still had a real live cow puncher to study. Just then the door of the Overland opened and a tousled head peered out.

"If you don't bring back my pants, you onery, dressed up Chicago dude, out there, lettin' on you're a cowboy, you bum gambler, I'll let the sunlight through your hide!" shouted a voice.

The best looker gazed at Charlie, and she began to cry. The professor was too frightened to speak, so he led the flight of the scientific investigators.

And Charlie went inside and bought.

The Romance of the Re- arranged Pairs.

"SET right down by Rant an' Holler, Vivian," said Mrs. De Shine, cordially. "Yuh folks is playin' on the same bill, an' it'll be comp'ny like fur yuh tuh be tuhgether. Susy, bring Vivian an' Pete the meat an' pitatters."

But Vivian Du Barry, of Smathers and Du Barry, the well known singing and dancing act, drew back from the table. She bent upon Rant and Holler a look of disdain, and executed a truly Parisian shrug of the shoulders.

"I won't mingle with them people, Mis' De Shine, an' neither will Pete," she said haughtily. "I'm in vodelille, an' a lady, an' no two false alarms from the legit kin stick up their noses at me, as was done by them parties tuh-day at the matinee—so I must ast yuh tuh kin'ly change us."

The other boarders ceased to cackle among themselves. A rough house seemed imminent, and they waited anxiously, hoping it wouldn't blow over. Miss Holler nudged her husband, J. Romeo Rant. "Listen to that hussy," she whispered, but Mr. Rant motioned her to remain silent. He stood up, for, being only a week old recruit from heavy drama, he could not speak to the best advantage unless able to move his arms freely.

He waved his hand with much dignity. "Madam," he said, addressing the landlady, "I prithee, harken! On behawlf of me wife and mesilf, permit me to request that you remove these vulgar ones as far from our immediate proximity as may be consistent in the limited space at your command! I have played parts of such subtle niceness of characterization that yon fellow"—here he waved toward Mr. Pete Smathers, whose mouth was open as these

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large words smote his wondering ears—"wouldst fain fail to comprehend the message, which aided, in truth, somewhat by the author's lines, I sent across the foot-lights to delighted thousands!"

"Hully gee! I guess he ain't there with that stuff!" commented the Property Man from his end. "I dunno how they think up all them gags."

The landlady was impressed. "Well, a' course, yuh know yer own game," she replied, cheerfully. "Now, Vivian, yuh an' Pete squeeze in up at t'other end by the Fitzwilliam-McJoy Trio, an' yuh'll all be fixed up grand. Susy, switch them plates around an' give Johnny Bell his pie!"

Glowering upon the hated legits, Vivian and Pete took their seats.

"We got chicking soup," said Susy, the slavey, so they took soup.

"Is they chicking stoo?" inquired Pete, eagerly. He learned that they were a day too late. There had been chicken for the Sunday dinner. The soup was merely a watery reminder of past luxury. His appetite partly appeased, Pete addressed the Property Man.

"We had 'em crazy to-day," he observed. "Took seven bows. That's goin' some."

"I'm gettin' a noo spangled dress, an' a swell lace coat, an' they'll cost nine hundred," put in Vivian, whose regard for the act's reputation was stronger than her desire to be entirely truthful. "We're goin' to Yurup in May, an' booked solid, 'ceptin' three weeks, till then. I guess the knockers'll leave us alone now!"

"Vivian's a lovely gell, an' a real artist," remarked Mrs. De Shine, as she hovered about Mr. Rant. "Her an' Pete's been married six months an' still tuhgether. A' course they have their little spats, an' they put a dressin' room at Keefe's, Philadelphy, on the fritzerine last week, but them things ain't nothin'. Well, how'd yuh like vod-daville, so far's yuh went, Mis' Holler? I was onct in the business myeelf, but it's a wearin' life, an' I'm satisfied tuh be this way. A' course I frame up an' go out onct in

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a while, an' I got a world of frens in the purfession. Did yuh go good tuh-day?"

Miss Holler sighed. She had been leading lady with the "Her Stepmother's Sin" company, in which Mr. Rant was leading heavy, and her first reception in the varieties had saddened her. "Well, the fact is, our sketch is above their heads, I fear. The real acting of our playlet, following a low-class comedy sketch, which appeals to the vulgar, naturally is not appreciated," she said.

"Yes, I s'pose so, dear," replied Mrs. De Shine, as she winked at the Blackface Comedian. "Have yuh got any bookin'?"

"Assuredly we shall not lack for engagements, me good lady," boomed out Mr. Rant, "when the agents view our vehicle. We—perhaps I should say I—will educate the audiences."

"That guy'll git fat in this business," said the Property Man, privately, to Mrs. Mangle, of the 'Three Mangles.

Little Minnie Mangle, the child wonder, playfully fired a robust dill pickle at Mr. Rant. "We're headliners, an' you ain't nobody," said she, derisively. "Is he, mommer?"

"Now, Minnie, quit, or yuh can't have no cawfee nor no pie!" warned Mrs. Mangle, whereupon dear little Minnie overturned her doting parent's soup into the maternal lap.

"Ain't she the little cut-up?" cried the fair Vivian, but Pete was uneasy. "Don't be astin' her up to our room," he said in a low tone. "Last time we stopped here didn't she put mud on a white shirt I'd only wore ten days? Have some sense!"

"O, I can't do nothin', as usual," retorted the rebuked Vivian fretfully. "I just gotta slave my life out an' never do nothin'." She relapsed into injured silence. The boarders had ceased to converse because he who delayed partaking of the food as it was passed around went away with an aching void still within him.

The burlesque people, who had arrived late, waited impatiently in the hall, jesting somberly among themselves.

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The comedians never said anything funny off the stage through fear that a crafty listener would incorporate the witticism in his or her act. Most of them knew nothing funny to say, so they fell back upon the familiar habit of "knocking" others and "boosting" themselves.

As Rant and Holler, refreshed by a long session at the bountiful table of the Maison De Shine, emerged, those in the narrow hall made a determined rush for the two vacant seats.

Two gentlemen were the lucky ones, and they playfully kidded their less fortunate troupe mates, who again retired to the hall. Miss Holler made her silk petticoat, which was part of her old second act costume as Lady Hethrington, rustle smartly as she ascended the stairs. Although a "legit," she had the desire of all females to rustle pleasantly through life.

"Silk skuts, eh?" sneered Vivian, who had paused below. "The airs that dame gives herself! They followed us on the bill, an' was a frost—an' him callin' me! Ef Pete Smathers was haff a man he'd lick that slob!"

"Aw, let up!" growled Pete. "Lick him yourself, ef you want'er!"

"Pig!" replied his wife, bitterly.

* * *

Up in their third floor back apartment Rant and Holler sat down in moody quiet. Miss Holler removed her silk petticoat and carefully repaired various rents. It couldn't last much longer. She needed a great many things, because one must have a front.

When the petticoat was made whole again, she delved in their "hotel" trunk, bringing forth the half of a green silk piano cover. They had no piano, and Mr. Rant had crying need of a new necktie, so she fashioned a puffed Ascot, and cut up the elderly one he had been wearing, to use upon the petticoat later.

"Oh, I wish we'd stayed in melodramma," she sighed. A tear spotted the green silk.

Mr. Rant really believed in himself, and he regarded

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his industrious and rather clever wife as the one object which stood between him and lasting histrionic fame. "Me good Mercedes, you weary me," he said, grandly. But his wife broke into what promised to be a long harangue upon the subject of his own talent.

"I told you to call me Maria at home," she said, sharply. "There's no use in you and me bluffin' each other. This act we got is rotten, and you know it! It's got no situations, no end, no nothing! I'm not going to be made a fool of by you, and if you can't put some ginger in the darned thing I'll go back to my old show!"

Mr. Rant regarded her very sourly. "Woman, have a care!" he exclaimed sternly.

"Oh, go to the dickens!" cried his wife, exasperated. She arose, opened the door, and slammed it behind her. "I hate him!" she muttered, breathing hard. Common sense had told her that the act wouldn't go without some comedy in it. Tragedy of the cheap sort wasn't a hit in vaudeville.

She might have been playing in a Western stock company, assisting at the afternoon teas on the stage after the two matinees a week, and invited everywhere in the best society—been a lion, in fact!

She could see the two sunny rooms hung with college banners and souvenir programmes, with the pillow-strewn couch that even a practiced eye couldn't discover was her bed at night, far away in dear Seattle. People were kinder there—or was it that with husbands like J. Romeo one couldn't get on well in any town?

She had left her happy home for him, and he had failed to make good.

"He's a big false alarm, like that blond cat said," she ruminated out in the chilly hall, through which swept an icy draft from an open bathroom window. The burlesque people were heavily descending the front stairs preparatory to starting for the theatre. She hurriedly stepped inside the bathroom and sat upon the edge of the painted tub, waiting until they had gone. In the bottom of the tub lay the coffee grounds from some careless boarder's

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"light housekeeping," and a wet newspaper added to its untempting look.

The hot water tap didn't run and the cold one was used to fill pitchers. No one ever bathed in the tub. A stiffly starched white curtain, blue in spots from overzealous "whitening," waved in the cold breeze. Dust lay thick on the window sill, as it did all over the house. They had only been there twenty-four hours, and already a dreadful tiredness was upon her. She was sick of the gabbling Rant, and of vaudeville, if this was what it meant.

From the open transom opposite the bathroom she heard loud voices. Vivian and Pete occupied this chamber.

"Keep still. Can't you see I'm tryin' to read this book?" Pete was plainly irritated.

"Oh, yer alus readin', 'stead of payin' attention tuh me!" shouted the fair Vivian. "I'm the hull act, anyway! Ef my figger was tuck out you'd be a 'chaser' 'stead of bein' featured! Ain't yuh goin' tuh sew on my shoe buttons an' press yer pants?"

Sew on her buttons! Maria Holler listened in amazement. She had to demean herself by shining Mr. Rant's shoes and packing around a gas stove and flat iron with which to freshen the tragedian's garments. Did this man perform like tasks for his shrew of a wife?

"Brush off my skirt, an' it gotta have a noo hook at the back!" Vivian continued.

But the downtrodden Pete seemed to have gone on strike. "See here!" he answered, gruffly. "You been gabbin' all day! Now let up! I don't mind doin' a few jobs, jest out o' kindness, but you been doin' the Simon Legree gag till I got enough. You sew on your own hooks and lemme be, I tell you!"

"Whyn't yuh beat yer pore wife?" shrieked Vivian. "It's what I expect! I kin go back with the burlesque show, an' mebbe I will!"

"Well, g'wan, then!" roared Pete. Sniffles and the turning of a page came from the room. Miss Holler went slowly back to her own room, thinking deeply. Why was it always thus? The unhappy Pete was hopelessly middle

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class, and yet he must possess a kindly nature. Why did the Rants and Vivians always find a mate the very opposite of themselves?

* * *

That night the gallery rudely hooted Rant and Holler's turn. Vivian, secure in her coming triumph, stood waiting her cue in the first entrance, attired in pink, with a many-flounced skirt.

Miss Holler, tripping upon her flowing Shakespearian costume—their act was a Desdemona and the Moor affair—saw Vivian savagely poke Pete with a lace parasol, used in the cakewalk finish, because he gallantly offered a helping hand to the fallen Desdemona. She threw him a grateful glance as she followed Mr. Rant, stalking toward the dressing room.

While he was doing his eccentric dance, the big feature, Pete's mind dwelt upon the fact that the ex-legit had nice, kind eyes. They didn't have that ugly gleam of the lovely Vivian's. All that night Vivian and he battled. By noon of the next day it was noised about that Smathers and Du Barry were going to split because he licked her, and even refused to give her as much as a nickel of the money she helped to earn.

Which was quite as near the facts as such reports are wont to be. And Rant and Holler were on equally bad terms.

It was about noon one day that Miss Holler strolled disconsolately through Union Square. The twittering sparrows and the warm sun did not attract her. She sank down upon a bench trying hard not to cry.

Across from her sat a young man, smartly, if rather loudly dressed, staring into vacancy. He seemed in trouble. Miss Holler did not even see him as she took out her handkerchief and wiped her watering eyes, but he saw her, and he got up and walked over to her bench.

"You up agin it too, sister?" he said, gently. "Say, I'm sorry. I guess you're a good fella, an' you got in wrong."

The friendly voice finished Miss Holler. "I—I wish I were dead!" she sobbed miserably.

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He patted her arm with a kind hand. "Let's go git a drink," he urged. "It'll bring you down to earth. You know me—Smathers? I'm goin' to be a single turn from now on. I've quit Vivian." He led her to a little German rathskeller, and Miss Holler trotted along quite meekly.

In the relief of swapping their troubled pasts they lingered until late. It was so late that, having taken a good deal of respectable refreshment, they finally noted the fat waiter turning on more electric lights. It was 5 o'clock! And Rant and Holler were on at 2:40 and Smathers and Du Barry at 3!

In wild panic the pair stumbled up the steps into the light and on toward the theatre, where they pushed their frantic way through the crowds which were coming out. The "supper show" was starting.

"Listen, honey," whispered Pete—they were like old friends now—"nothin' to it, both our acts are cancelled. It'd be a big fine fur a headline act, but the bounce fur ours. Better git your wardrobe!"

"I told him we wouldn't last till Saturday night!" said Miss Holler, illogically. Both acts were "closed," as Pete had predicted. Mr. Rant and the furious Vivian met them back of the stage. The mixup which followed will live in stage history. Pete walloped Mr. Rant and Miss Holler, maddened by Vivian's insults, punched the other lady violently in the eye. The teams split right there.

* * *

Many things can happen in a few months. Miss Holler was free once more, and so was Miss Du Barry. With all parties willing, the divorces had been easily procured. The quartette disappeared for a time.

* * *

It was a pleasant May evening when Smathers and Holler, the feature act on the Billiams circuit for eight weeks, reached New York. They did not stop at the Maison De Shine, but at a good hotel on Union Square.

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On the same bill were Rant and Du Barry, who do an act in which many things are mingled. They opened the show, came on again at 5:20, and did their last show at 5:50. They were "chasers," that most humiliating position in vaudeville.

They had a small room at the Maison De Shine, and they joined the boarders at dinner.

"Pass the axle grease!" shouted Mr. Rant, gaily. "I'd go to work if I had me tools!"

"What tools?" asked a new recruit from the "legit." Mr. Rant was old in vaudeville now.

"Me knife and fork—I'm a table finisher," was the answer, and everybody laughed at the chagrined questioner.

"My heavings, I wisht you'd see the dog Smathers an' Holler puts on," said the Blackface Comedian, between bites. "Got a red carpet from the dressin' room to the stage, so her Paree dresses won't be ruint, an' two maids, an' he's got a vally. Headin' the bill tuh our show."

"I knowed 'em both well," said Mrs. De Shine, proudly. "Yuh 'member Pete Smathers, Vivian?"

"Yes, an' I dunno how them dubs does it," replied Vivian, envy biting deeply into her soul. "Her covered with di'monds, an' him waitin' on her like a suhvant!"

"Yes, an' they're the lovin'est couple I ever see," put in the Property Man. "Well, they treat the gang right—tips on every side. Them's the kind!"

"Throw the cow acrost!" said Mr. Rant, gruffly, indicating the milk jug.

"Where do yuh folks go from here?" asked the Sou-brette.

"Don't book that fur ahead," replied Mr. Rant. "But I'm dickerin' with Huber's."

The landlady addressed the boarders at the far end confidentially, "I think Pete done jest right!" said she.

The Fickleness of Pugnose Grady's Girl.

DIAMOND FLOSSIE had climbed up four shaky flights in a Pell street house that she might make a social call upon Pugnose Grady's girl. The latter was at present not permitted to venture into the gay world, because "Pretty Sammy" was just out of "college," and he had money.

Pugnose himself conducted a "dump" within the confines of Chinatown, and he didn't feel like taking chances on Pretty Sammy "stealing" his lady friend. It was well known among their mutual friends that Blonde Ida had never quite forgotten an early romance, of which Sammy was the hero.

Diamond Flossie condoled with her friend. "Every one in Callahan's is sayin' that Pugnose ain't treatin' yuh right," she exclaimed, warmly. "Why don't yuh quit him? That Sam's a swell dip, an' blows his coin like a sport. I never see Pugnose give up."

"It's the Gawd's truth, too!" remarked Ida, folding a loose garment which apparently would have shied at sight of a washtub, closely about her stout person. "Look what I done fur him, an' I ast him yestiddy fur a hat, an' I seen a elegant one over on Hester street, what'd look grand on me—an' he puts up a beef about the elbows shakin' him down ag'in an' cleanin' him out. They gits a sailor fur a bundle it ain't t'ree night ago. His bit must a' been—what's that?"

She jumped up from the bright pink velvet couch of evident Grand street origin, and darted to the window.

"They pinched him again? Kin yuh see the store from

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here?" Flossie was eagerly peering out beside her hostess. A whistle, clear and loud, came from the street below them as Ida opened the window.

"Nix—'tain't that—ef that ain't Sam's whistle I hope I may choke," returned the agitated Ida. "Many's the time he gimme the office to do a hotfoot in the old days. Gee, Pug'd croak me ef he knowed I was doin' this."

She leaned out and whistled a reply. Groups of Chinamen were gabbling at intervals along the street. From the floor above came the squawk of a Chinese fiddle, while the river wind, which blew coldly, bore the sickening odor of cooking chop suey.

No one answered as the women looked. The fat copper, chatting in a grocery doorway, glanced up idly. There was no enamored Sam among those in the narrow street. Diamond Flossie sighed. She had hoped for some mild excitement. Married to the doting and wealthy Chinese gambler, Tom Lee Wang, and perfectly satisfied with her life of easy plenty, Flossie depended on the various affairs of her acquaintances for entertainment.

"That was a wrong steer," she said regretfully, but as she spoke they heard the whistle again.

"I see him! I see him!" Ida was waving a fat arm wildly, and a man on the balcony of a chop suey joint across the street, two floors below them, signalled back, but more cautiously. Pugnose Grady seemed in line to lose a home.

The man disappeared inside suddenly. They saw him cross the street, and two minutes later a stealthy footstep approached the door. Waiving ceremony aside, Pretty Sammy stepped inside. Not to arouse jealousy, he kissed both fair damsels, but Flossie's was a friendly salute, while to Ida fell the burning kiss of love.

"Come on an' quit this bloke!" Sammy urged, after rapturously greeting the buxom custodian of two loving hearts—his own and Mr. Grady's.

"We was told yuh turned a trick an' got nothin' but, now," remarked Flossie amiably, elevating a good sized foot to the table. The three sat smoking cigarettes in

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much comfort. Sammy explained that, having been forced to divide his loot with two plain clothes gentlemen, the remainder had dwindled rapidly, what with treating the gang and being a right guy generally. He was about to imprint another loving kiss upon the happy Ida's well rouged face when she jumped up in wild alarm.

"IT'S PUGNOSE!" Her voice sounded cracked in its fear, for Pugnose was a gun fighter and a tough proposition in a rough-and-tumble, like most barroom scrappers. In an instant the gaslight was glinting on Pretty Sammy's patent leather heel as he squirmed under the bed. Ida's heart was chug-chugging so that it hurt when she breathed. Flossie decided hastily that the protecting presence of her own Tom Lee Wung was greatly to be desired.

She went out as Pugnose came in, muttering a frightened greeting as she passed him.

"That dame's nutty," said Pugnose in disgust. "Hell! What's she runnin' away from me for?"

"I—I dunno, Puggie," faltered the lady. Pugnose said that she was nutty also. He seemed morose. Finally he sat heavily upon the bed, under which Sammy must be sweating horribly, in all the dust and litter of old papers and boxes.

"Pretty Sammy's out, the fourflushin', cross-eyed slob," burst out Pugnose.

"Is he?" politely returned the shaking Ida.

"Listen here!" began Pugnose abruptly. "They's eleven hundert here, see? Plant it in yer sock. I t'ink they're goin' tuh pull us again. Youse stick here till I say youse kin go out, or I'll wallop youse." He threw over a roll of money. Obediently Ida followed instructions. Pugnose arose. He had to get back at once, he said.

As he opened the door the woman saw a short, black club smash against the top of his bullet head. Again it smashed, and Pugnose fell to his knees half out in the hall. Pretty Sammy, crawling out from concealment, had sprung upon him. Now he dragged the limp Pugnose inside.

"How's that, babe?" he asked coolly. Then he "frisked"

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the unfortunate Pugnose, bringing to view a paper on which was the latest combination of Pugnose's safe over in "the place." "Get your rags on, skate down there an' holler out he's mugged an' sent you for the bankroll to spring him," he said. "And here—here's seventy bucks! Put 'em in your kick. Then chase back here an' we'll blow to Boston. I got a good graft there."

Fascinated by his business sense, Ida quickly made ready. They knew her at the saloon, and trusted her as Pugnose's dearest possession should be trusted. "Don't be long," said the ardent Sammy as she hurried away.

* * *

Frisco Kid, the barkeep, began to laugh as she dramatically told her sad story. "What you up to, anyway?" he asked pleasantly. "Better smoke up, Ida. You're a lyin'. But have a drink anyway."

A stiff hooker of whiskey, and then another had the expected effect. The Kid was so sympathetic that she told him all about it and what a sweet pet Sammy was. The Kid thought quickly.

"Say! You look good to me," he said, "an' that Sammy ain't nothin'. You want a smart fella, not a bum! Gimme that combination. How'd you like to go to Frisco with me? It's a swell little place!"

Oh, the fickleness of females! Entranced by his arguments, Ida realized that she had often noticed the Kid's manly graces. "Then let's sack the joint!" said she, resolutely. Pugnose's beloved large diamond stud, considerable cash, the "fall money" of two pals, left in his keeping, were in the safe. They then emptied the cash drawer.

"The ferry for ours," cried the Frisco Kid, as they fled into the alley behind the saloon, "an' we got Sammy's seventy, too!"

"Oh, that mutt!" replied Ida, contemptuously. "Is me lid on straight?"

The Fake Eviction.

THE Ingenue—What, more canned peas? Really, all along the cirkit of parks we been havin' green corn an' them things.

The Landlady—These here is fresh peas, Imogen.

Little Minnie Mangle (the child wonder)—Oh, Antie Maggie, you is a old fibber! I seen the cans in the kitchun!

Mrs. Mangle—Minnie! Ef I don't wallop you good and plenty when you leave the table! Oh, only them what has the raisin' of a cheild knows what torture kin be inflicted by their actions.

The Landlady (coldly)—Yuh don't need tuh try tuh square it. Mis' Mangle. An' I must ast yuh folks tuh kin'ly hand me what's comin' tuh me. I'm gettin' sick of warmin' vipers clost tuh my heart.

Fred Flap (of Flip, Flap and Nippup; just closed with the "Merry Madcaps")—Waal, the kid don't mean no harm. I seen the cans from our winder, as fur as that goes. And we want some curtains put up. Them people across the street kin look right in at us.

Tessie Flip (his wife)—And unless the gell sweeps under our bed we'll quit. We ain't no common persons, and are used to comfort.

The Property Man—Well, I'm fairly easy goin', but I've stood for things here I wouldn't at no other place. There wasn't no towel fur my bath last night and it's the second Satiddy night the same gag has come off.

The Slavey—Honest, Mista Johnson, I put one in your room.

The Landlady—Yuh folks seem tuh think I kin keep a Walldof here, when out of heaving knows how many

THE FAKE EVICTION.

boarders jest two has settled. Ef yuh'll pay what yuh owe, Mista Flap, I kin fix the curtains. Ef yuh had a house full of parties eatin' their three squares a day, an' sayin' they ain't workin' an' can't pay, where'd yuh be?

Tessie Flip—Ef we hadn't lost our understander, Mista Nippup, by him gettin' married, we'd be workin' this minute. I'm sure we allus paid before.

Eddie Smoke (blackface comedian)—I'll be there with bells on in a couple a weeks, Mis' de Shine. Primrose is after me, but I'm holdin' out fur bigger money, an' I may go with Dockstader. He's crazy to sign me.

The End Man—He'll sure be crazy if he does, son. You want to cook up another pill. I think the last one got burned.

The Ventriloquist—Ha! Ha! Say, what's Fido making the row about?

The Slavey (opening the door. Fido, the poodle, is heard yelping in hall)—Mis' de Shine! The agent's here, an' he says he's a goin' tuh put us out if the rent ain't paid!

Little Minnie Mangle—Mommer, I wannet cuppa cow-fee, or I won't do my dance to-night!

The Landlady—Susy, keep him out! Oh, I'm ruint, an' they ain't no helpin' hand put out tuh save me!

All the Boarders—Here he comes now!

Eddie Smoke—Pass the pitattas, quick. I'm goin' to get one good meal before we have to blow.

Mr. Murphy (forcing his way into room)—Madam, you settle within five minutes, or I will evict you from these premises! Hand me four months' rent, because we will wait no longer.

The Landlady (weeping)—Mista Murphy, I swear tuh yuh I ain't got a case note left in my stockin, an' that's the truth. I got money comin', but I can't get it!

Mr. Murphy (pitilessly)—Then out you get. I got six U. S. Marshals with me.

The Ingenue—Is Bat Masterson one of 'em? Because I knowed him in the West, an' he wouldn't see a lady get no such a deal!

THE FAKE EVICTION.

The Landlady (shrieks and falls fainting on chair)—
All bets is off! All is over!

Fred Flap—Here, I can't see no woman sufferin'.
Gimme what we owe her!

Tessie Flip—Ssh! Don't be a fool! Ef we give her
that there money how're we goin' to live till the show
opens?

(Mr. Flap orders her to produce, and she digs up a
fat roll, peeling off three tens.)

The Property Man—Come on, folks, chip in! I'm
paid up, but here's six bucks in advance! (Throws money
on table.)

Mr. Mangle (also been under cover)—Here's our
twenty-six! this ain't no time to be stingy.

The Landlady—Help!

Little Minnie Mangle—She kin have the quarter what
was throwed at me at the matinee, mommer! Honest,
she kin.

Everybody—Little pet, isn't that sweet?

Mr. Murphy—Hey, come on, you can't gimme that old
con! Got to be more'n that!

The Property Man—Don't you use that tone in here, or
I'll beat you to death, see? Get out'n the hall, you loafer!

Mr. Murphy—I won't! Come on with the rent!

The Landlady (sitting up)—Oh, Imogen, ef yuh was
tuh pay up I cud manage!

The Ingenue (slowly digging)—Maggie, I dunno how
I'm going to send pawr the money for the mortgage now,
but there's the forty I owe, an' I wisht you luck.

Tessie Flip—And her makin' out she was broke all this
time. I allus said Imogen was a two-faced hussy!

Mr. Murphy—Get out o' my way! (He pushes the P.
M. roughly and snatches at money. The Landlady re-
vives and grabs it first.)

The Property Man—Who you talkin' to? You will
bully a woman, will you? There! (Punches him; Mr.
Murphy goes to floor.) Come on, boys, jump on him!

Eddie Smoke—Make him eat this here steak—that'll
be the thing!

THE FAKE EVICTION.

Mr. Murphy (feebly)—Oh, not that!! Lemme up!

The Landlady—Mista Johnson, don't kill him, fur my sake! An' kin'ly clear the room, folks, so the second table kin git their dinners!

Mr. Murphy (as he is permitted to rise)—You got to pay me more'n five for this job, Maggie de Shine! I agreed to play this part, an' help you make 'em settle, but not to get put on the blink.

All the Boarders—Say, gimme my money back. This fellow's an imposter.

The Landlady—Five is all yuh git, Clarence Murphy. As fur yuh folks, much obliged. I guess I got yer numbers now, so in future yuh pay in advance!

The Rise and Fall of Dooley's Dog Act.

"DOOLEY'S DOGS" was an act which played the vaudeville houses and was always working. Old John Dooley didn't receive the big money which the toplineers could command, but his salary of seventy-five went a long way.

Unkind show folks said it wasn't any wonder he had money. If he didn't live any better than the dogs themselves, why shouldn't he? Without doubt old Dooley had the mangiest, rattiest dog dog act in the business. A greasy, greenish black dress suit, with a silk top hat so ancient that a thick fuzz, resembling the winter coat of a horse roaming the prairie ranges, covered its surface, comprised his own stage wardrobe.

He had bought the suit years before of a small, thin man. As Dooley was tall and lanky, the garments did not fit with that perfection of which we sometimes hear. Before his frugal breakfast it was his invariable custom to dip his fingers into a bowl of water, whether, as he often said quite soberly, they needed it or not.

Once a week he washed his face, according to report. As for the ten dogs, he explained that it was a foolish waste of time to be fussing over and bathing them. They only got dirty again.

After a long season West, Dooley's Dogs were playing New York. They closed the show, as usual, at a "continuous" house, and their owner was congratulating himself that his expenses would be small this week. Dooley indulged in no such frills as a private property man, and as he had been permitted to keep his yelping troupe under-

THE RISE AND FALL OF DOOLEY'S DOG ACT.

neath the stage, in the lumber room, he would be forced to tip the house "props."

At the stroke of 10 on Monday morning he was in the green room for rehearsal. Other early birds were waiting for the pianist, who rehearsed the turns, but Dooley hustled up, ahead of them.

"'Member me from last season, Purfessor?" he began, fawningly. "Dooley's Dogs—you know me."

"You bet I do!" replied the leader, disgustedly, "and you still owe me that five you promised me."

Dooley was horrified. This fellow could undoubtedly kill the act, and he had craftily contemplated doing his usual "promising" and getting away with it. He smiled anxiously, hoping to propitiate the young man, who gazed at him with an irritating grin. "Now that'll be all right, my dear boy." Dooley laid a soiled hand upon the pianist's arm, which the latter shook off. "You really get a rest in my act! You see, I ain't got any music, so you kin plug any publisher's stuff an' play what you want. Just gimme a long chord before I make the announcement, an' when I say 'Waltz!' to the white hound, play a waltz. Sumpin' lively for the cakewalk, an' a little 'chills an' fever' when the bull terrier goes up the ladder for the big leap. I'll fix you Satiddy night, don't you be scared o' that."

"Well, you gimme an order on the box office, then," answered the pianist, unimpressed. "You got to show me, Mister Con."

But Dooley soothed him. He always did. From the Orpheum in 'Frisco to Tony Pastor's leaders hated him, but he always slid through. He asked more favors than the rest of the bill put together, and, having no conscience, he lied and crawled out of rewarding those who worked for him in some way. He slouched off now to confer with the stage manager.

Pansy Newton, of The Three Newtons, nodded gaily to the leader. "We was on the bill with 'em in Saint Looey," said she, giggling. "An' gee! we gells never knowed which dog was the wuss, Dooley or the mutts!"

THE RISE AND FALL OF DOOLEY'S DOG ACT.

Pansy wasn't a bad looker, so the leader laughed. He retorted with a mild jest of his own. "Say, he's a nice, kind, old pappy guy," he remarked. "Why don't you cop him out and quit work? He's got money."

"Quit yer kiddin', now, Augustus," said Pansy, but she didn't mean it. Such a handsome leader should be encouraged, and after he had inspected her lead sheets, and Phil Newton, her brother, had fetched his cornet so that they might get the harmony, and Pansy had explained about her dance, she smiled upon the leader graciously.

But his interest was merely a passing one. His old friend, Violet Hale, was whispering her troubles in his ear. They'd put Violet with the three-a-day turns, and she was in despair. If only he would consent to play her act, because any one knew the other pianist would crab it!

When she heard him agree to save the fair Violet and to come up to the flat and see the folks after the show, Pansy sniffed contemptuously, and departed. "Where we dressin', Bill?" she inquired of the stage manager. It was two flights up, and after our little Pansy had taken the water jump in the shape of two buckets belonging to the theatre's scrub ladies, she began climbing, only to find that while Phil and his wife Mabel had a good room, she must dress with the "Four Queens of Comedy."

She went downstairs again. "The idee of puttin' me in with them dames!" said she, wrathfully to "Props" and the stage manager. Both said it was a shame. They then walked away.

"Darn 'em; laffin', are they?" said Pansy, fretfully. "I s'pose it's a joke that I gotta be throwed in with them ex-burlesque wimmen—Four flushes it oughta be!"

Everybody was busy. Performers stood about, knocking each other in the kindly vaudeville fashion, while the Four Comedy Queens were squinting at the board, wailing in distress because they went on after a couple of "legits," new recruits to variety, who had a cheerful act with a couple of murders in it. The fattest queen tearfully declared

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that it was all pure spite, and they'd have a fine chance to make good in such a place on the bill.

Phil Newton's trunk hadn't come, and the tenor of the Jersey City Quartette, who always brought their music and rehearsed the turn, hadn't turned up. His three partners were fussing about, and Collins & May, the buck dancers, were quarrelling, as usual, over who had lost the trunk key. Dooley's Dogs, downstairs, set up a muffled baying and snarling.

It must have been fate that made Mabel Newton ask her sister-in-law, Pansy, where in time Phil's saxophone was? "Well, Mis' Newton, I ain't his vally," replied Pansy, grouchy. "I dunno nothin' about it! But I suttently know I'm bein' used bum in this act! Ef I git near the centre, yuh an' Phil go up'n the air, an' yuh got all the fat lines—an' I'm gettin' sick of it!"

"He put yuh in the business!" taunted Mabel. Both ladies indulged in violent language, and Mabel sailed away sulkily, while Pansy stopped at the property room door. Mr. Dooley, engaged in wheedling "props" for a certain gold chair upon which Katie, the poodle, would look cute, cast a watery, approving eye upon Pansy's blonde beauty.

"Fine gal," said he.

"Props," rooting out blue curtains for a sketch team, grunted. Mr. Dooley forgot his mission. He approached Pansy and said it was a cold day.

"Havin' a leetle family row, eh, my dear?" he asked. Pansy looked haughty, and then, with a startling change, she threw a dazzling smile at the unsavory Dooley.

"She's a reg'lar cat!" she exclaimed. "Fur two cents I'd quit 'em! I kin git forty partners, an' not be played fur a mark. Is all the dear dawgs well?"

Dooley swelled visibly. This delightful creature was flattering him by telling him her little secrets! It was true that vaudeville has no secrets, but as the fair ones generally scorned to notice either Dooley or his soiled dogs, he was not aware of this fact. He hoped he wouldn't wake up.

Graciously the charmer remarked that he must be real

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lonesome traveling about alone. Dooley's heart, covered with the barnacles of many selfish years, began a sudden house-cleaning. It gave a real human throb, which filled him with such a blend of fright and pleasure that he stammered bashfully in his haste to say something which would prevent the lady from leaving him immediately.

"I—I'm goin' to get s'more dogs," he said, eagerly, which wasn't true, but it sounded well, "an' fix it up swell!"

In five minutes Pansy had confided to Dooley her whole past. Long practice had made it possible for her to tell it in even less time if she had to, and if she forgot a husband or two in the recital, what of it? Such mere detail is frequently overlooked.

Pansy had an idea. She was a quick worker and a lightning calculator who possessed no sporting instincts. The struggling victim would be given no chance to get away if she once decided to nail him.

Dooley was doomed even in this brief space. He returned to his dogs with his mind going through a string of mental acrobatics which almost unfitted him for active dog training. He neglected to swear in his usual ferocious manner at his troupe, nor did he kick them. He sat down in the midst of his noisy animals, and in this familiar atmosphere endeavored to recollect all the sprightly Pansy's remarks.

She had taken a sincere interest in the dogs, and—here Dooley grinned foolishly at the bull terrier, which regarded him curiously—she had pressed his hand at parting! Among the odorous dogs, Dooley closed his eyes. A bright, alluring vision of the future came to him. There was money in it, and fame.

He might ensnare this golden tressed pet and put her in the act! In purple tights, with a picture hat, a velvet evening cloak and a whip, snapping it spiritedly at the dogs, would she not boost his salary to unheard of proportions? And then it would give him unmeasurable private satisfaction to have this little coquettish bird trotting about working for him.

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"I'll do it!" he whispered, exultantly. "I'll shine up to her an' marry her! She likes me right now. Any one kin see it!" Alas, poor Dooley!

Over in her boarding house Pansy, the little rascal, was eating her luncheon (Dooley had his with the dogs, most economically), and she told her lady friend, Bessie Microbe, of The Four Musical Microbes, all about her plan. "I'm good an' sore at Phil an' that wife of his," said Pansy, "an' I'm goin' tuh quit. I'm goin' tuh grab off this old guy an' not waste no time. He's rollin' in money, an' I don't keer ef the hull purfession gives me the boot—I kin show all the knockers sumpin' when I start blowin' his roll! When I got it all I kin give him the laff an' beat it!"

"Heavings, my dear! I dunno's yuh cud stand the old critter around," replied Miss Microbe, dubiously. "Still, I dunno. Better tuh ketch him than some good lookin' fella what yuh gotta work fur. But the dawgs is so horrid."

"Well, a'course he's gotta slick 'em up first, see?" said Pansy, cheerfully, "an' stake himself tuh a couple soots. I ain't no fool, my dear, an' he won't gimme nothin' but the best of it. But don't yuh breathe it!"

The other swore a ladylike oath of silence, and immediately rushed off to her own matinee at an uptown theatre, where she told seventeen performers about it, enjoying quite an extended popularity as the bearer of such toothsome scandal.

* * *

Dooley watched Pansy's turn from the first entrance. He followed The Three Newtons on the bill. Twice she winked at him as she went through many marvellous steps in her buck dance, and Dooley smiled back fondly. Throwing aside the cautious habits of years, Dooley took a chance between shows, visited a barber's, and paid twenty-five cents for a bath. Refreshed, and rendered even more reckless, he got a shave and haircut after it.

In a Third avenue window he noted a gay pink tie. It was 50 cents. Lost to reason, Dooley entered the shop

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and bought the tie. He wore it with conscious pride with his dress suit at the night show.

The pianist snickered as "props" from the wings wiggled a message concerning the glad raiment. The stage manager jokingly declared that Dooley must be going to get married.

"Mebbe I am, at that," said Dooley.

When he had paid his sister her salary after the last show on Saturday night, Phil Newton asked about her trunk. "Did the man get it?" he queried. "Ours is gone."

"I ain't goin' tuh Boston with yuh," returned Pansy, calmly. "I've quit the act!" The Three Newtons came together in a clash which drowned the wild barking of Dooley's Dogs on the stage, which were doing their big jumps amid considerable applause, but Pansy wouldn't relent. They could get another woman in her place, or bill the act as a team, and if future bookings were cancelled, it wasn't her fault. Mabel was too mean to get along with. "I say you SHALL come!" roared Phil, furiously. "Git your grip!"

"Take yer hands offa me!" shrieked Pansy. "Yuh ain't my boss! Help, help!" For Phil was dragging her toward the stage door, while performers rushed from their dressing rooms to see the fray.

Dooley, torn between love and duty, heard his Pansy's cry for aid as the "dog funeral" was in progress. The big St. Bernard and the bull terrier were seated on their gilt stools at the back of the stage.

"Sic him! Bit him, Joe and Bluff!" he commanded, the while attending to the funeral. Both dogs dashed from their stations and upon Pansy's angry relative.

Zip! The terrier fastened hungrily upon a Newton leg, while the St. Bernard jumped for Phil's throat.

"They'll kill my Phil! Help! help! help!" screamed his wife, while Pansy, anxious for all the spotlight she could secure, squealed twice and fell in a "prop" faint into the electrician's unwilling arms.

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Dooley had to call 'em off. Then he made his grandstand play. "Stand back. She is my wife!" he shouted.

* * *

"Mlle. Pansy and Her Wondrous Leaping Dogs" were an "extra attraction" at the same house where Dooley had met his fate. He was now included in the general billing, as one of the "dogs," as his dear little wife frequently reminded him.

She permitted him to train them, but she bossed the act, and with a hand of iron. The purple tights, with a hussar jacket, in gold and white, as Dooley had seen them in his earlier dreams, became Pansy wonderfully. Not only did she whip the dogs, but just as often the lash flicked smartingly about Dooley's own elderly legs.

He wore a stage costume of black satin and she forced him to wash and wash until he loathed water with a deep and ever increasing hate. And he had to wash, and comb and curry the dogs, tie ribbons on them, and perform all such menial service as the determined and domineering Pansy pointed out. The props glittered with gold and fancy trimmings, and Dooley's money, hoarded for twenty years, paid for it.

Fine rings flashed upon Pansy's lily hands, and scintillating diamond frogs, snakes and birds, decorated her purple chest. Dooley sported a set of near-pearl studs. He was not allowed to have more expensive jewelry. She said he'd only lose it.

A dollar watch ticked loudly in his pocket. His wife had two gem-incrusted timepieces, which hung upon her person from diamond brooches. She took her friends to supper, while Dooley stayed with the dogs, because she said he'd be more at home there. She booked the act and drew the salary, and when any daring soul remonstrated, set the dogs on 'em.

Dooley had a breed of big white hounds, silky haired and pretty, but of small value. There were six in the act, and a reserve supply at some kennels near New York. He paid a visit there one morning.

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"Why, she took the whole eight away a month ago!" said the dog fancier, in answer to Dooley's amazed questions. "I s'posed you knew it. Say, the old woman seems to kind o' run you, don't she?"

"Well, it's goin' to stop," growled Dooley. "Stop to-day, too!" He returned to their boarding house full of fight. This was too much, for without a doubt she had sold the white hounds. But when the intrepid Pansy shrilly demanded information as to his whereabouts during the morning, Dooley wilted.

"Where was yuh? Joe went an' tore up a pair o' my tights!" she cried. "Whyn't yuh stay 'round an' look out fur them dawgs? Honest, I never see such a lazy old thing! It's what I git fur makin' yuh summon!"

"Yes, Pansy; yes, my dear," said Dooley. "I'll whip him. That'll fix him!"

"Jest leave my dawgs alone, Mista Dooley," said Pansy, majestically and inconsistently. "An' git on over tuh the showshop this minnit! Them poodles been doin' that sail-or's hornpipe wuss'n wuss. Yuh gotta rehearse 'em. I ain't goin' tuh have no bum effects in my act—see?"

"Vixen!" snarled Dooley, outside the door. But he did her bidding. Three days later the best white hound in the act disappeared. Dooley asked about it, and his wife said she didn't know where Billy was. When another one went, Dooley wept with futile rage.

"He wasn't no good anyway," said Pansy. "So I let a party have him. We got plenty right now."

In three weeks only four of the dogs were left, and Dooley was frothing at the mouth. The manager of a Buffalo house said he'd have to cancel the act, but later agreed to let them work out the week. In the excitement of Saturday night, with trunks going out and performers saying good-by, Dooley missed his wife. He also missed her theatre trunk, and three more dogs. And she had drawn the salary at the box office.

One dog was left—Bluff, the sagacious bull terrier—and Dooley saved Bluff from the wreck. She had gone, and for good and all, as he discovered very shortly. He was

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glad of it. It was worth untold gold to lose her. That night he didn't take a bath, nor did he wash his face next morning. He gave grateful thanks that he was once more a free man, and Bluff seemed relieved, too. They ate together in much cheerfulness of spirit.

* * *

"Mlle. Pansy and Her Wondrous Leaping Hounds" are much sought after for hippodrome attractions in foreign capitals. Kings—of, possibly, inferior quality, but still royal—have given her presents. Sometimes an American vaudeville act cuts across her trail and they laughingly speak of "Dooley and His Dog," who work three-a-day back in America, and for very little money. When an act is late the stage manager gives Dooley the high sign to stretch his time out ten minutes. Sometimes, again, they cut it to five. The prop. sausage which the dog jumps for is mouldy looking, and so is Dooley—mouldy but contented.

Mr. De Shine's Return.

The guests of the Madison de Shine are at dinner.

THE LANDLADY—Now I hearn yuh win a bet tuh the races yestiddy, Mista Pickem, an' so parding my astin' but are yuh, or are yuh not, goin' tuh hand me what you owe?

PETE PICKEM (of the Texarkana Comedy Four)—Listen, Mis' de Shine. We ain't worked in two months, an' while I admit I win sumpin', I lose it back on the last race, see? Ain't they no way we kin frame this thing up, cause we got the Norman Cirkit of parks startin' the first?

THE SLAVEY—Porkin beans, or cornbif an' cab-bitch?

BERTINE FEATHERS (of Bertine Feathers and her six Panatella Girls)—Don't they never have no chicking here? I tell you, trampin' up'n down them agents stairs, an' then comin' back to the same old thing, is sumpin' dretful.

THE IRISH COMEDIAN—She sure sets one bum table.

THE LANDLADY—Susy! Gwout tuh the kitching an' git Fido's boned turkey an' his cream, an' watch like a hawk that the dolling don't eat no bones. What's all these here kicks up tuh this end? Seein' as good, healthful food is projuced by me, they ain't nobuddy got no beef comin'.

THE PROPERTY MAN—Haw! haw! Makin' a beef is the nearest us fellers gets to beef round here. Now s'long's I'm at it, Maggie de Shine, listen here!

MR. DE SHINE'S RETURN

Either ice cream an' cake an' strawbrys an' lamb chops, is dug up for my supper, or I quit and quit now!

MILDRED MOLAR (the "queen of burlesque")—Gee, but I admire his nerve. Well, he won't get it, cause Maggie's a tightwad and allus was.

THE SLAVEY—Tea or cawfee?

THE LANDLADY—Mista Johnson, yuh made yer last bluff! Now yer goin' tuh git called. NO! NO! NO! Yuh kinnot git no lamb chops. Folks as good as yuh has et my grub, an' liked it, an' although I'm a lone gell, an' unpertected, yuh nor no guy kin tell me my business! Take yer soot case an' go!

THE SLAVEY—Jimmy McDoodle's in the hall, an' he's got a souse on, Mis' de Shine. He's actin' real rowdy an' says he'll shoot his wife!

AGGIE DE VERE (Mrs. McDoodle in private life)—Help! help! Oh, save me, he'll murder me, he said he would!

PETE PICKEM (the landlady has temporarily forgotten him)—Slide them beans acrost, will you? An' the dill pickles. Them beans looks real tasty.

THE PROPERTY MAN—Well, GOOD NIGHT! No more fur mine! You kin have that hall bedroom what ain't been swept in thirty years, an' I'll vamp out of here! Here, git outer my way!

FIDO (the poodle)—Bow wow! wow-wow-wow!

THE END MAN—Give him another kick, old pal! I hope he chokes!

AGGIE DE VERE—Oh, gells, what'll I do? Jimmy's turble when he's stewed!

THE SLAVEY—They's a big fat man in a check soot with him, an' he says he's the boss of this house.

THE LANDLADY—Does, eh? Susy, that's Bill de Shine, an' I know it! Call a cop quick, an' warn that guy if he sets a foot in this here dinin'-room he's dealin' with a desprit woming!

THE IRISH COMEDIAN—I guess I'll be goin'. Never did like to mix in on these here family things.

THE PROPERTY MAN (as door opens and red-

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faced man enters)—Don't shove me like that! Look where you're goin'!

JIMMY M'DOODLE (also entering)—Where is she? Wait'll I ketch Aggie! She was seen talkin' to her fust husband at Fourteent' an' Third avenoo to-day, an' I'll cut her heart out!

ALL THE LADIES—Oh, mercy! He's got a knife! Help! Help!

AGGIE DE VERE—I'm dyin', I know I am. I was only talkin' to Fred a minuit!

THE BUCK DANCER—Another dame caught cheatin', eh? Oh, they're all the same.

THE LANDLADY—Leave this room, yuh miserable coward, what I tuck from a First avenoo butcher shop an' made a gent of, an' yuh couldn't stand the gaff, an' now yuh dare tuh come here, do yuh? Git!

MR. DE SHINE (loudly)—Don't nobody fret me. I'm peevish if I'm interfered with. This here is my house, an' I'm a goin' to stay here an' run it. I got some rights.

THE LANDLADY—William, don't yuh lay a hand on me.

AGGIE DE VERE—Oh, farewell! My end has came!

ALL THE LADIES—These here men is a fine bunch to do nothin' while ladies is gettin' killed.

MR. DE SHINE (producing a gun)—Whee-ee!

JIMMY M'DOODLE (also heeled)—Whee-ee-ee! Zip! Bing!

THE LANDLADY—Mista Johnson, don't let 'em put this here place on the cheese. For Gawd's sake, save us!

THE PROPERTY MAN (sullenly)—I ain't boardin' here no more, Maggie. Lick him yourself.

THE BUCK DANCER (from under the table)—Are they gone?

THE LANDLADY—Mista Johnson, yuh kin have anything yuh want to eat. Won't yuh come back?

THE PROPERTY MAN (seizing both belligerent

MR. DE SHINE'S RETURN.

gentlemen)—Out you get. See? You will come tryin' to be roughhouse, will you? Gimme them guns! GIMME THEM GUNS! (He soaks each in turn with a heavy fist.)

MR. DE SHINE—I'm goin'. Lemme out. I was only kiddin'.

AGGIE DE VERE—Don't hurt my Jimmy, you brute!

MILDRED MOLAR—Fine for you. Gee! They took it on the run, all right.

THE LANDLADY—Maggie de Shine kin never say enough tuh thank yuh.

THE PROPERTY MAN—Don't say nothin'. Get them chops and berries, an' get 'em quick.

The Way of a Music Hall Song Bird.

DOTTY ARLINGTON, the British music hall queen, was playing a limited engagement in New York. The stage manager at the big vaudeville house where her first week was booked commented on Dotty to the musical director, before the Monday rehearsal.

"Tough nut, that," said he, "in my opinion. When I was across, I heard her sing. The songs were too warm for this country. By gosh, we won't stand for that class of stuff over here."

"She's an old bat, ain't she?" inquired the leader. "Been hearing about her since I was a kid."

But Dotty wasn't as old as that. In her child-wonder days her first backer had named her after a reigning favorite of the 'alls, and the name had caused many to consider the high-salaried younger woman as older than her age. She swept into rehearsal, attended by "mommer," stout and very British, and with a 'orrid 'eadache, from the beastly Yankee wind.

She smiled upon the leader as she explained about her lead sheets. He was polite and careful. "This fairy with the bleached blond hair won't con me," he remarked, aside, to Bill Planana, of the Three Dancing Plananas. "She might as well cut that smile.. I don't fall for that old gag."

Bill Planana said she wasn't a bad looker, though with the flossy rags off she wouldn't stack up so well.

"I'll bet a hat that ain't her mother," said the leader, before the matinee, as he smoked a cigarette out on the fire-escape.

WAY OF A MUSIC HALL SONG BIRD.

"Gee, she's got 8,000 pounds of junk," said the stage manager. "I saw 'em opening a jewel case. How do they get 'em? The gals on this side can't, unless they buy 'em. That sad old joke about the show women and their diamonds seems to be on the level with her. What's her songs?"

"Oh, they're all right. She couldn't use the same ones here. Well, I never did like the English." The leader hurried out front.

"There's one lad none of the dames can get a pleasant look from," chuckled the stage manager. The property man agreed. "They're havin' tea in their dressin'-room," he observed, grinning cheerfully. "Them Johnny Bulls are daffy over it, ain't they? She says the steam heat is killin' 'em."

"I guess all the conveniences they get in English rooms they can put in their eye," said the stage manager. "Never saw one yet who wasn't making a roar about sumpin'."

* * * * *

Dotty's act went big. She was clever, and worth the money she was getting for the engagement. The songs were perfectly proper, and the leader decided that he might have misjudged her. She had a childish smile, which finally got in its work on him. The house was darkened for the "pictures," the last turn of the matinee, and the leader signalled his first violin to direct the men for the twenty minutes.

As the leader was on his way out he passed Dotty's dressing-room. The door was open. Mommer, a garish figure in her plain black gown, covered with diamond birds and beasts, and curlicues, and intertwined "D. A.s" which Dotty would later assume with her street garments, was there. The grease paint was still upon Dotty's fair cheeks, as she combed strenuously at her frizzy hair.

"Ow, ow d'ye do?" she called, cordially. "Goin' 'ome? You 'aven't met me mommer. Stop a bit."

With inimitable grace she wiggled her silken street

skirt into place, pinned the bath towel more closely over her chest, with maidenly modesty, and motioned him to a seat. And she turned on the ingenue smile. Mommer murmured a greeting.

"I'm absolutely dyin' with the 'eat," said the poor lady piteously. "I shall 'ave to lie down while Dotty's out to dine."

"We're that lonesome," confided the blooming Dotty, "an' fawncy 'aving to dine alone, as I shall 'ave to do! I could cry me eyes out with 'ome sickness. Nothink 'as been a bit nice."

The leader sternly advised himself to have a little hoss sense. This duty attended to, he asked Dotty to dinner. The stage manager was proceeding to his own home as they went out.

"You'll promise to bring 'er back sife—she's not used to bein' out alone with gentlemen," said mommer. "Will you 'ave the ermines or the syble box coat, me love?"

"The sybles," replied Dotty.

"Well, I'll be darned!" breathed the stage manager, as the leader nodded coolly and took an arm of the lonely Dotty. He bought a bottle of wine at dinner and thanked fortune that he had a ten spot in his pocket, which he had intended to send home to the folks.

Dotty told him all about dear Lunnon, and her own booful little 'ouse in South Kensington, and the motor car, and the brougham and all that.

"When I was last over I was a wee kiddie, an' the Four 'Undred was lovely to me," said Dotty, dreamily; "give me diamond bricelets an' sweet little watches—I'm lonely with no attentions being pyde me this trip."

"How old were you then?" he asked.

"I'm twenty now," said Dotty, diplomatically. The leader gazed at her with foolish and sudden infatuation.

"You poor dear little thing!" he said fondly.

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The affair was the scandal of the week. The leader crabbed act after act, because his mind was on Dotty.

WAY OF A MUSIC HALL SONG BIRD.

He offered to lick the stage manager and kill any man who again asked if Dotty hadn't forgotten to wash up before going out. It was true that a flush of brilliant carmine shone upon the pearl of her complexion. It had shocked the leader at first, but he grew used to it, and finally liked it. He made wild plans to capture this British daisy and bear her away, where he and she would roam through life together. He even thought he wouldn't mind mommer coming along, 'eadache and all.

Every time Dotty met him she told him how depressing it was to receive not a single jewel hidden in a "bookay" of rare flowers, as she did at home. On Friday the leader drew \$308, which he had saved for a trip to green fields and pastures new in the golden Summer when he laid off—and exchanged three hundred for a handsome diamond ring. The eight bought the roses. He handed them over with a velvet box to Dotty personally at the night show, receiving a sweet glance in return.

After the show he hustled to her dressing-room. She was just emerging, clad in the sybles and all the jewels. His ring sparkled among the others upon her left hand. Three men were with her, and all were very gay. The leader knew them all. There was a fresh song-plugger with an elongated nose, a noisy-looking agent and a side-walk comedian who sometimes worked.

"Dotty!" called the leader, shocked to see his shrinking pet in such company.

"Ow—'owdy do?" said she, calmly. "Come on, boys! I'll buy supper. I sye, d'ye remember the old Koster & Bial's corkroom when I was over before? We 'ad grite times! Let's all get jolly well soused, as you say over 'ere!"

They went out shouting merrily. The leader swore. "Stung!" said he.

Dopey Polly Never Reached the Orchard.

"THE gang" were gathered in the stuffy back room of "Boston Annie's" resort for crooks of both sexes. Boston Annie was the lady friend of a famous porchclimber now doing his bit away out in San-Quentin, because one of the gang had squealed on the big job in Frisco.

The crooks considered it only just to patronize her establishment, for Annie was stuffing all her profits in her stockings, to get the porchclimber free, if money could do it.

All sort of riff-raff drifted in to the bar of the place, but only the elect dived suddenly into the dark alley off Chatham Square, and were allowed to pass the well-barred door from which led a damp, narrow passageway to the sanctuary in the rear of the bar.

Dude Clanahan, who went under various other names up around Forty-second street and Broadway, when he was lining up a live one for the good old wiretapping game, sat in one corner with Diamond Stella. This young woman was a "dip"; she could abstract the contents of a wallet, replace it, minus the bills, while one waited, conversing brightly meanwhile upon current topics.

The Red Swede, who was a yegg man, and a good one, sat over a pint of champagne with Dopey Polly, from Chinatown, and his side kick, the Runt. The Swede was a burly chap, and the Runt, as his name implied, was small. But he could open any safe he could get near. In his profession he was highly re-

POLLY NEVER REACHED THE ORCHARD.

spected while the Swede, being a lush, was rather looked down upon, especially since he had taken up with a useless hop fiend, when he might have chosen any one of a number of ladies of real talent in crookdom, instead of a dead one. Boston Annie herself had urged him to quit Dopey Polly, and find a mate more worthy.

"Aw, she's goin' tuh croak soon, Boston," said the Swede. "She's got the con, an' payin' her board ain't much. Leave her alone, can't yer?"

"You'll be hittin' the pipe, too," said Annie, warningly. "I ain't got no use fur a dame what can't even stall while a guy gits off a kettle (watch). Why, she can't get her hand in a flour barrel!"

"I know she's awful ignorant," returned the Swede, apologetically, "but let her be." The Runt liked Dopey Polly. She was a forlorn little devil, and he felt sorry for her. She used to tell rambling tales about an orchard, and some pigs, and rot like that, and of a town in the mountains, a long way off, where once, long ago, she had lived. No one listened to her but the Runt and the Swede. She wasn't really the Swede's "girl," but the rest called her so, and he didn't care.

The partners had picked her up over in Doyer street one night, and the Swede, drunk, had bought her a feed of chop suey. They staked her to a couple of dollars, then found she had no home, just "sort of hung around the hop joints." So they got her a room, up three pairs of stairs, and on off nights they dropped round and took her out to see life, much to the disgust of the fraternity.

Big Marie had been getting nasty, and laughing at Dopey Polly's old shoes. Polly, tears in her worn-out blue eyes, hid her feet in the broken shoes, but the Runt rose wrathfully.

"Come on, Pol," he said, gently. "I didn't never think! We're plenty strong in the kick, an' me an' you'll go buy tings fur youse. Come on, kid, don't

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mind that old battleax—she's daffy 'cause she's out longer'n usual, an' ain't been mugged fur a week." But Dopey Polly was weeping; long, convulsive sobs shook her body.

"Look at her! Snivelin' cry-baby!" sneered Big Marie. She had once made a play for the Swede, but he couldn't see her. One on each side, her champions lifted Polly, and, recovering herself, she smiled foolishly, and went with them.

* * * * *

It was late, but the cheap stores along the Bowery were still open. The trio sought one, where the new shoes, and other articles, were purchased. Somehow, with her wardrobe freshened, Dopey Polly looked a lot better.

"I wisht," she said sadly, "as I could quit the pipe."

"Aw, yer kin break away, sister," said the Swede. "Say, here's a grand plan. What's tuh stop yer goin' on back an' findin' the pigs an' the orchard, hey pal? We'll stake yer."

"On the level?" queried Polly. The Runt grew enthusiastic. "Let's git a drink in Scotty Lavelle's, an' talk it over," said he. Half an hour later it was all framed up. They had around a hundred coming at a fence over in Mott street. The Swede bade her sternly to pass by her favorite hop joint, next Callahan's, in Doyer street, and wait at her room until they came with the money. She was to go next day, and "never come back no more," as said the Runt, earnestly.

The fence keeper would only give seventy, and they took it. As they turned to go out of the dingy house, the Runt saw the man shove a bundle of yellow-backs into his pocket. A roll like that would fix Polly in great shape. He looked at the Swede and saw that he, also, had seen it. The Swede nodded, the Runt grasped his meaning; they were alone with the receiver of stolen goods, and it would be quick work. The Swede had him down in an instant, ramming a big hand over the lips that tried to cry out, while the

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Runt "frisked" him for the roll and other valuables.

Quick! Some one was coming from upstairs! And as the Runt started to rise, the victim's hand shot out, and with a ripping sound, a knife tore its way towards the thief's heart. The Swede had the knife out and was viciously stabbing at its owner, in another half minute, then supporting the Runt, he made for the door.

"I'm gone, Oscar," muttered the Runt. "He got me then. Here's the coin, git away while youse kin, and see that poor goil gits home. I can't—go no—further, ol' pal, the stuff's off wit' me!"

They were around the corner, with the Swede carrying the Runt, as he fled desperately, hugging the shadows. A whistle blew, and then a club pounded on the sidewalk.

The cops were after them. He stopped, in a dark hallway, and waited, and the Runt kept groaning though he tried not to. And then, without warning, while the Swede looked out cautiously, a billy, wielded by the fearless hand of the Law, cracked him on the head from behind.

"Got 'em, Jack!" called the big copper, panting from the effort of holding his breath while creeping silently after the prey.

The Swede was down and out; the Runt, bleeding to death, had fight in him, but the hand which tried to hold up his gun wobbled, and the copper's partner grabbed it.

"The fly mugs. Here's the finish!" gasped the Runt, faintly, as the sound of men running smote upon his ears, while the policemen yanked the Swede out into the light.

"He'll swing for this," and the big copper slipped the bracelets over the Swede's limp wrists, and then hastily felt for weapons.

* * * * *

The Runt was dying, even before the ambulance

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could arrive. He was calling for the Swede, so the latter, dazed, but able to stand, was hustled over to where he lay.

"They got yuse, Red?" whispered the Runt, bitterly. "Say, she's waitin', an' t'inks we trun her down 'bout them pigs an' the orchard! Ain't it hell?" He began to cry weakly. The Swede knelt down, and patted the Runt with his manacled hands. "Die game, pal," he said. "Don't let the cops see yer weaken, Runt."

But the Runt's light had snuffed out. The Swede stumbled to his feet, a copper on either side.

"Who'd he mean, your gal?" asked the big one, curiously.

"Didn't mean nawtin'," responded the Swede, fiercely. "I don't have no skirts round me."

* * * * *

"Come out o' that!" and the Chinatown copper prodded a heap of humanity huddled by some steps next the Chinese grocery in Pell street. They had thrown Dopey Polly out of the hop joint, because she was crying all over the place. Now she told the copper a disconnected story of an orchard and a pig, and how the Swede hadn't made good.

"You got 'em bad, woman," said he, finally. "I guess I'll have to lock you up."

Making a Prince Into a Good Sport.

"I DON'T care if he's the German emperor, no guy's going out with me that calls me 'my good man'!" shouted Fraser River Charlie, "so tell him that, and the brag goes." Old Man McPherson sighed. "He's only a fool tenderfoot, Charlie," said he, "and we'll soak him hard for the trip. We got to do it."

"Not fur me!" said Charlie, stubbornly. "Prince or no prince, he don't go. He's in luck I didn't hand him one. I'm nobody's servant."

"Law, anybody knows that," said Mac gently. "Why, he'll be amusin' when we get out in the hills. Them people allus make me laugh, son. It's all in how you take a thing. We're gettin' better money than any other guides in the country from the Cooley boys, and there 'tis."

"I kin go back punchin' cows," growled Charlie, "or back North an' wash out enough placer minin' to get along. I aint forced to stick here."

"Be a good feller," urged Mac. "I don't want to find no new pard, son. You and me been good friends." Charlie's face lost it's frown.

"Sure, I'll go—fur you," he replied, "but it ain't for that tow-headed prince guy."

"Now, you're talkin'," said Mac, approvingly. "That's the stuff!"

The two young princes of a certain German state

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were on a trip around the world. They had been entertained in almost royal state by the Governor General of Canada, at Ottawa, then started west toward the Pacific, landing at Laggan, in Alberta. Back in Ottawa they had listened to tales of the "Big Horn" country, where grizzlies, moose and elk roamed through the forests, and nimble Rocky Mountain goats scooted over the rocks.

The Cooley Brothers outfitted tourists who came to hunt. They gave them anything their innocent hearts desired as long as the tourist settled. It came high, but the Cooleys declared that handling tenderfeet was worth big money. Now the royal gentlemen had arrived, having neglected to notify the Cooleys of their coming, and both brothers were off on the trail for a two-week stay overseeing a large party. Charlie, much fretted as to the correct manner in which to receive the visitors, had done his best to please them, by offering to domicile them in Buck Cooley's own house, in which he kept bachelor hall, and immediately commanding Jim Moy, the Chinese cook, to hustle up grub.

"You see, your honors," said he, "or perhaps I should say, my lord, we don't get many up here. We'd have been all set if we'd known you was comin', but I reckon you kin plug along on what we got. Anything you want that you don't see handy, just holler out. Feel like a drink?"

The members of the royal party were shocked. "His Highness Prince Adelbert will partake of some wine later," said Colonel Von Weiss, a yellow-haired, wasp-waisted person, who came between his masters and a cold world on all occasions. "You may address your remarks to me, and not quite so familiar, my good man." His Highness, although fatigued, condescended to cast a languid, pale blue eye upon the rebuked

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Charlie. "The hell you say!" exclaimed the latter hotly. "Well, you'll wait awhile before you're ast again."

Thereupon he slammed the door of Cooley Brothers' warehouse upon the august tourists, leaving them homeless upon a sun-baked road, with only a few full-blood Stoney Indians for company.

Billy Fat Belly, very dirty in his calico shirt and overalls and sloppy mocassins, gazed at the astounded Germans with a foolish stare. Then he slowly disappeared around the corner of the building, after listening a moment to the excited conversation of the travelers. The stupid air faded when he met Mac. "Say, big bunch of folks out in front," he said. "Charlie told 'em to go to hell. He done right, too. Feller wouldn't take a drink with him. They say the're kings, or some such a thing."

Mac knew the Vancouver express had stopped, and that several people had got off. "Kings!" he said, scornfully. "You've set in the sun till it's got you crazy, Fat Belly."

Fat Belly, injured, declined to answer, but he loafed along behind when Mac hurried out. It took a few minutes for the latter and the enraged military guardian to understand each other, but Mac had handled Indians and whites in wartime and peace, all his long life, and his diplomatic explanations as to hot-headed youth and Far Western customs soothed the colonel's ruffled dignity. He settled them in the house, encouraged all the ten gentlemen in attendance to disconnect from the large revolvers they carried, having come well heeled to a savage clime, and interviewed Charlie a little later.

"How many packers you going to take?" asked Charlie. "They got a million bags and trunks up there at the deppo." Mac said they'd see about it.

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He made a ceremonious call after supper. "Now, who-all's going huntin'?" he asked. The colonel said all of them simply must go. "In Africa we have a grand hunt," said he, quite socially, feeling it were best to jolly these rude men a bit. "Elephants and lions. Prince Wilhelm had splendid luck. The beaters drove out a lion, and when it had several shots in, and was quite safe, His Highness boldly walked up and fired, killing the lion. Marvelous, was it not?"

Mac agreed it was not. He made several private notes, none of them complimentary to the two princes, then stuffing themselves at a plentiful meal.

"Well, lemme see how many saddle and pack horses you want?" began Mac.

A stout German emitted a frightened cry. Horses, he declared, were not for him. In a hansom, or any comfortable vehicle, yes, or why not, he naively inquired, a litter such as they had ridden in while at Lake Victoria-Nyanza?

Prince Adelbert roused himself. "Ourselves, Von Weiss and Franz and Emil shall go," said he, "the rest remain here. I am sick of seeing them. Find my elephant gun."

"And mine," cried Prince Wilhelm, gleefully. "Ach, Gott, I shall another kill to mein fadder show, no?"

Mac endeavored to persuade the daring sportsmen that elephant guns were not exactly the weapon for mountain shooting in the far Northwest, but Adelbert imperiously insisted that the guns would go. That night Charlie, Mac, Billy Fat Belly and Cree Sam, an Indian guide from Assiniboia Territory, looked over the royal outfit. Sleeping bags of German make, heavy enough for a climate north of .53, pneumatic air mattresses, rubber ponchos and air pillows, canvas hammocks suitable for ship or tropical use, fishing

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rods, gold mounted and in heavy cases, and a dozen shotguns, wonderfully put together, expensive, no doubt, but scorned by any man who shoots straight enough with one bullet to hit his mark; all these were there.

"It is I provide these," proudly observed the colonel, stepping lightly over the various piles. "Here iss a machete to cut a way through jungles. Here an ice axe and Alpenstocks, from Mont Blanc itself, my good—that is, Herr Mack. Acids I have and limewater, to ward off scurvy. Also potatoes, excellent, I am told, for the same disease. Four kegs of Wurtemberg sauerkraut, Prince Adelbert's own golden tea service, these must all go; also their highnesses' twelve shooting suits. They have many more, but I think we can get on."

Billy Fat Belly turned his head away. His rotund stomach shook, and he seemed about to choke. "The native," said the Colonel, fixing Billy with his monocle, "appears unwell."

"Quit that, Fat Belly, you fool!" admonished Mac. Billy snickered. "I'm going out to find the elephants," he said, and fled.

"Odd savage," remarked the colonel.

Mac and Charlie sat in the bunkhouse smoking and talking until nearly midnight. The Cooley Brothers' system was to let the tenderfeet have what they wanted, and have it in any shape. The charge for a hunter who really knew what he was about was ordinarily ten to fifteen dollars a day. This included a horse and saddle, grub and sleeping accommodations. If he wanted fancy grub and tablecloths, or even a lace bedspread, he got it, but he had to pay more. One guide to every four persons was the rule.

But if a sportsman desired the whole time of the

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guide, he could have it, and it cost eight a day more. The royal party was one that ordinary prices would not fit. Already a list of food which the princes must have had been submitted by the colonel.

"As Buck ain't here, we got to do the dickerin' " said Charlie. "This is sure goin' to be one tough game. Luggin' all that truck'll take ten extra animals. I think princes like them guys oughter be shot before they get growed."

"How about them elephant guns?" queried Mac anxiously. "They'e set on takin' 'em. That there stand they rest 'em on weighs a ton. How in Billy be damned we kin get sich a thing on a cayuse's back, goin' over rough trail, is more'n I kin see."

From the guests' quarters came the whiney sound of a violin. Some one was playing a Strauss waltz, while many voices yodeled in German. Charlie laughed. "The idea of a mob like that havin' money," said he. "Not one of 'em ever did a good day's work in his life. I see one way to carry the guns."

The next day was spent in gettinng the animals down from their range on the Bow River, and sacking supplies. The enormous amount of stuff which the tourists calmly ordered taken made up an outfit which required the services of several packers. The tourists lolled about in the warmth of a June day. Mac had extoled the beauties of Lake Louise and Mount Lefray to them, but the Colonel said they wanted wilderness, and lots of it. He had been told the Herr Cooleys often penetrated hundreds of miles into the untrodden forests of Athabasca. It was there they would go.

"Well, he'll get all he wants," remarked Mac, "and if she starts a snowin,' we'll have a picnic. I bet they got no more idee of a real wilderness than I have of flyin' "

The Colonel kindly regaled Charlie with a few tales

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of his own exploits at hunting the boar in the Black Forest. He had also a terrifying record at bagging pheasants in His Majesty's preserves. He yearned to connect with a grizzly, and the fiercer the bear the better he'd like it.

Loaded like an emigrant train crossing the plains, the party took the trail to the hills next day. Two days later found them camped in Kicking Horse Pass, with the royal tourists down and out. Prince Wilhelm, when helped from the saddle by his valet, a lanky Swiss, called for a meal at once. "You will serve me first!" said he.

"I am first, mein brudder!" exclaimed Prince Adelbert. "I am the elder. Be silent."

An exciting scene followed, for Prince Wilhelm smote his relative violently on the nose, causing it to bleed. Then Adelbert bit his brother's left ear, and the Colonel, in separating them, came in for a kick in the shins. The battle over, a fractious buckskin horse tangled its feet in a cinch rope, and whirled wildly about, landing heavily upon the cherished elephant guns. "Hey, Fat Belly, ketch them cayuses before they stampede!" roared Mac, jumping for the buckskin, which started for the royal tent, just erected. The horse bolted through the opening, upset Adelbert, who was washing the gore from his face, and down came the tent, with horse and prince sending forth weird cries from underneath it.

"I want to go home!" wailed Adelbert, when they got him safely out.

"Gott in Himmel, it is snowing! And in June! This is an outrage!" yelled the Colonel.

"I'll send word up and have it stopped!" said Charlie shortly. "Now, you have them kids shut up that row. Want to scare all the hosses off? Ten of 'em's headin' for home now."

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"Do not dare to order me about, sir!" retorted the Colonel spiritedly. "Get more horses, then. And bring dinner. Do you hear?"

"Say, I'll hand him a wallop in a minute," muttered Charlie to Mac. "A whole outfit upset and him shootin' off his mouth at me, who forgot more'n he ever knowed."

Billy Fat Belly and his Indians were loping down the canyon, trying to get in front of the fleeing animals, which had got away during the buckskin's disgraceful conduct. The two-gallon can of royal sauerkraut, which had made as much trouble as the disabled elephant guns, was a wreck. A horse had kicked a hole in it, and maple syrup from a broken bottle had mingled with the delicacy.

The Colonel wept when he saw it, and he ate a little sadly hoping it wasn't quite spoiled. The three air mattresses wouldn't blow up for some reason. Four Indians and the valets worked at them while the Chinese cook got supper at a big fire. The snow turned to a drizzling rain.

At six it was dark, with the wind howling among the tents, sending smoke into their faces and blowing out candles as soon as lit. Prince Wilhelm, in a heavy coat, scurried to the fire. He was most unhappy. Moving about to escape the smoke, the royal foot hit a big coffee pot heating on some coals. Over it went into a pail of rice, and Jim Moy's pan of frying fish. "Gee Cli!" squealed Moy, darting forward with a pan of venison in one hand. "What molly you? Gettee 'way, gettee 'way, heap damn fool! Me cookee. No want flesh butt-ins 'round!"

Wilhelm would stand no more. He hurled a rock at Jim Moy with many oaths. Promptly Moy lammed him with the pan of meat. Every man in camp

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rushed for the pair, but the prince had a black eye before Mac dragged the furions Moy away.

"I will have mine uncle make a war on this country!" yelled Wilhelm. "Unhand me, swine!"

"Here, cut that talk out, you little runt!" said Mac, sternly, as he cuffed the royal ear. "You're in a white man's country now. Don't you be so gay or I'll warm your hide good."

The camp was demoralized. Everybody favored spanking the two princes on general principles. Adelbert demanded that he be taken back to the railroad that instant.

"If you go you'll forfeit what you paid down for a month's trip," said Mac, sternly. "Behave yourself and you'll get a good deal, but if you get gay I'll treat you like I would a hoss thief. G'wan to your tent. You'll eat when it's ready. Savvy?"

"I shall report your actions!" shouted the valiant Colonel, rallying to his prince's side. "Bring the food now! Now! Do you hear? Yes, your Highness!"

"I have a pain in my toe!" Wilhelm's face was full of woe. "At once it must be massaged!"

"Yes, your Highness; I will see to it," answered the dutiful Colonel. Billy Fat Belly had brought the animals back. He listened attentively.

"These is worse'n wimmen!" he said shaking his head. Charlie poked Mac in the back. "Do they still amuse you, pardy?" he whispered. "The're makin' one big hit with me, all right. I just been over diggin' out a dressin' gown for his nibs, Mr. Adelbert. He's cryin' for his maw."

Jim Moy declared he would not cook for the chastened Wilhelm, who had retired into his tent, but Mac finally, at 8 o'clock, got the grub dished up. The paying guests ate sulkily inside the big wall tent. The valets moved about uncomfortably outside in the rain. One explained to Mac that he dared not stay inside

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nor stray out of call. The Colonel would whip him if he did.

Mac rigged a shelter for the wretched serving men, cheering them with a hot meal and a few swigs of rye. The guides had covered the baggage with canvas and sent the horses up the creek to graze on bunch grass. Now they huddled under little tepee tents eating and discussing the amiable party in the big tent. Fat Belly camped with Mac and Charlie, being an educated Stoney.

"They kin go as far as they like short of killin'," observed Mac. "That's what we get paid for. But I'm sure goin' to teach that outfit Western ways before they hit the tote road for home. Wach me!"

"I never see such a onery bunch," said Fat Belly. "Kings don't set well on my stummick. Come on in, Moy. All through?"

The cook, damp and cold, crawled in, holding the tent flap against the rain. "You're the fightin' Chink, all right!" declared Charlie, with a grin. "Well, sir, I was mad clear through, but I had to laugh at that."

"Plince makee me sick," growled Moy. "No good."

"They'll play hell crossin' the big summits. I kin hear 'em hollerin'," observed Mac. "But I allow I'll make 'em act as if they liked it. They got my mad up now, son."

"Pleese to come out," said a voice entreating from the darkness outside. It was Emil, the German valet. He reported that the doughty Colonel was in deadly fear of wild animals. He must have an armed guard about the tent.

"Animals are more afraid of him than he is of them," and Charlie got up.

"Pleese, I t'ink not, excellency," replied Emil, timidly. "Becos he very mooch afraid."

"Elephant hunters, hey!" said Mac. "They're birds, they are. Tell him we'll fix it. He kin set down on my lap if he'll feel easier." Much relieved, Emil sloped away through the wet.

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Fat Belly and Charlie agreed to reassure their charges. Arrived at the tent, they unceremoniously entered. Both princes, in red quilted satin dressing gowns, were perched on camp stools, shivering, their feet drawn up from the damp ground.

The Colonel, mindful of etiquette, wore his riding boots and trousers, with a dress shirt and tie and a red hunting coat. He was doing his best for his royal masters. He handed them one article of food at a time. Billy Fat Belly was enchanted with the Colonel's neat make-up. He squatted upon a piece of canvas, allowing Charlie to talk. The latter proceeded to arrange the tent's contents. He spread a tarpaulin on the ground, covering it with a bearskin rug which he bade Fat Belly get from a pack. The princes, gazing at him in a frightened manner, slowly untwisted their legs and sat down on the warm skin. They consulted in whispers, and seemed to have lost much of their earlier hauteur.

"Ask him about the elephant guns, Adolph," whispered Wilhelm.

The Colonel obeyed. "Well, I s'pose I can tinker 'em up," replied Charlie, "but look out, that candle'll go out if you set it there!—between you and me, you know, they're lobsters in this country. Take a fool's advice, and let one of the Injuns take 'em back to Lagan. But suit yourselves. I don't care."

Wilhelm turned his swollen optic on Charlie. "I haf lofe that gun," he said. "I lofe it. But this is a strange place. Take it, then. I have pains mit me, from riding on that animal which will not trot. He runs much."

"I am also most sick with ache," put in Adelbert, gloomily, "in my legs. Und cold I am."

It became quite sociable with this general conversation going on. The faithful valets were summoned to rub the royal legs. Then Charlie put aside personal feelings and handed out a few heart-to-heart remarks. The party listened attentively as he informed them

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that three-quarters of the Colonel's plunder was a useless drag on the expedition. If they would, the Indians should take the excess back. They could then travel light and take some comfort. He went out and fetched a bottle of rye, and although the Colonel said he couldn't drink American whisky, he partook liberally. Charlie left Fat Belly, with a 30-30 on his knees, on guard.

"Say, I got 'em eatin' out of the hand already," he told Mac gleefully, when he had joined his partner.

In the morning it was clear and cold. After breakfast the princes, not quite so friendly, but still fairly civil, selected what should go back. Four packloads went.

They broke camp, traveling east. Mac had decided that before going north they would try the tourists out nearer home. They stopped at noon half way up a small summit. The saw edged, barren mountains of the Desolation Range lay to the east in a blue haze. Below the riders, packhorses toiled up the slope bearing the still unwieldly baggage.

Adelbert became grouchy. He announced that he would sleep, no matter what happened, and if there was no feed for the horses, or water, he didn't care a hang. "I am the prince," he ended, grandly.

"Can't stay here," objected Mac. "We got to get down the other side, to wood and water."

The Colonel had been quiet. Now he raised his voice noisily.

"If the prince commands, we stay!" he shouted.

"No, we don't!" said Mac. "We march, we do."

A loud argument began, but Mac won. The outfit went slipping down the slide rock, which rattled into the valley beneath.

Wilhelm suddenly lost his nerve. "I cannot look down! I am sick in my inside!" he announced.

Charlie threw a hackamore over his horse's head and led the nervous passenger until they reached the level ground.

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"Holy Moses! A grizzly, and not a hundred feet away!" Mac was excited. He pointed to some rocks.

"Get your guns, if you want a bear," he warned.

The daring Germans took one look; then all together they began to run, but not toward the bear, which growled ferociously when it saw the men.

Fat Belly potted it, while Charlie rounded up the panic-stricken hunters. "Well, I'll be darned!" said Mac, disgustedly. "The measly cowards. Run from a bear! And they come out to hunt 'em!"

That night yells came from the big tent. A woodrat had scuttled over Wilhelm's couch, and he was crazy with fear. It awakened everyone. Then, before dawn, a little pica (hare) gnawed at a tent rope and Adelbert howled for help. "We might as well sit up nights after this," scolded Mac. In the morning the Colonel got cold feet. He said he didn't care what happened, he couldn't stand any more, and he was going home. Adelbert joyfully said he'd go, too.

It was up to Wilhelm. He looked at Mac. "I am weary—yes," he admitted, "but I am going to keep on. Soon I shall afraid not be."

"Bully for you, kid!" said Charlie, heartily. He held out a hand, and Wilhelm took it. "You got good stuff in you!" Mac's tone was approving. "Stick to us, and we'll see you get a bear yet." The others went dolefully back, with Charlie in charge.

Mac, Fat Belly and Wilhelm went forward.

Six weeks later three men loped down the valley of the Bow toward Laggan. They drove two packhorses loaded with mountain sheep horns and various skins ahead. Arrived in town, the yellow-haired young man jumped down first. He began uncinching packropes, working hard.

"Stand still,—— — ——, you!" he admonished.

"Say, Bill, you fool, you got the wrong rope," called Mac. "Bet you a dollar you have!"

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"Bet a dollar I ain't!" returned Prince Wilhelm. "Did I not pack him? I'm glad its not my turn to cook to-night. It's Fat Belly's."

"Yes, and we're home. That's one on you!" laughed Fat Belly.

"Now, what can I do to help, boys?" asked Prince Wilhelm, cheerfully. "I know. I'll run the horses down to the meadow."

"Don't be long, Bill!" said Fat Belly. "'Cause we're goin' to get a drink."

"I'll come a-running," yelled Prince Wilhelm, chasing the horses down the road.

Mac laughed. "You can even make a good fellow out of a prince if you got him out'n the hills," said he.

"You bet!" said Fat Belly.

Prince Adelbert and the suite received the hunters an hour later. The Cooleys had fed the former well, and arranged ladylike trips hunting jackrabbits and chipmonks, a safe pursuit.

"I haf youn bett ready, mein brudder," greeted Adelbert, "and a fine feast. We haf the men in livery to wait upon us. Come."

Prince Wilhelm slowly bit off a chew ot tobacco from a ratty looking plug. "Not for mine," he replied, emphatically. "Fat Belly's twelve bucks ahead of me playing stud, and we got a game at the bunkhouse to-night. I'm going to live down there with the gang, anyway. And I got to wash my shirt. S'long."

The Poker Game in the Pullman Smoker.

THE man whose hat bore a New York label appeared bored. He threw down his magazine and glanced up and down the smoker. The two men in the seat opposite him were trying to feel interested in a game of freezeout they had been playing for an hour. Neither could win, and they had pushed two stacks of matches across the little table so often that their hands and the makeshift chips were grimy with dust.

"What time is it, Smith?" asked one. Smith yawned. "You've asked me that forty times," the other replied wearily. "Three o'clock. I wish we could have a four-handed game. Two hours more."

Smith's friend looked at the stranger. He seemed to be a gentleman, and he was well groomed, with a cheerful face. Smith looked at him, too, and the stranger smiled pleasantly. "Pretty tiresome with all this dust," he remarked.

The three got together at once. Poker was what all agreed would be liveliest, but they needed another man. A lanky fellow, wearing a big coonskin coat with a red cotton lining, and a fur cap, walked up the aisle in search of the water tank. Smith's friend winked.

"He's a sure enough Rube," said he, "but he might play if we made it small stakes. I take it we all only wish to pass the time?"

"Penny ante or twenty dollar jacks—it's up to you, sir!" replied the stranger, amiably. What a nice man he was! Smith already liked him immensely. When the coonskin

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coat man returned, Smith stopped him. Would he join them just to make up a game?

The farmer hesitated. "I ain't never played much, 'ceptin' at the tavern to hum," said he, "but if it's light don't mind ef I do."

They made it a quarter limit, Western poker, with the joker in, and it went as jack, queen, king or ace, and filled a straight or flush. This was Smith's suggestion because he was from Colorado and not used to jackpots. He said this way you could always play on any old thing, and it made it lively. They had poked along for half an hour and no one had made much. The New Yorker threw his knife into the centre.

"Whoever gets the buck make it a dollar jack, boys," said he; "this is pretty slow."

Smith's friend won the first jack. Smith had lost six dollars raising on two measly pairs, and he wanted the six back. "Why not a two-dollar round of jacks just for once?"

The farmer got the little joker when drawing to a busted straight. After he had let Smith grab the pot on three fours, he innocently inquired of Smith's friend just how that pesky "critter," as Smith called it, worked.

How they laughed when he showed his hand, with the straight he had laid down! Smith kicked the New Yorker under the table joyously. These Ohio jays were funny.

The farmer dug out an old wallet tied with a string. "I jest sold my ten acre medder, an' I might need this," said he ruefully. He hadn't won a pot, so far. The New Yorker was just about even. Smith and his friend were feeling fine. They laughed and made jokes, and Smith whistled.

Finally the farmer got nervous. "I'll have to go and ask Hanner 'bout stayin' any longer," said he. They played three-handed until he went into the day coach and returned. Hanner had permitted him fifteen minutes more.

There was a round of ten-dollar jacks. This was a sporting crowd now. Smith stopped whistling, and

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squinted closely at his cards. His friend had his hat over his eyes, and was breathing noisily, and he had become very cautious, with that chill politeness which a man assumes when he is a loser. He spoke harshly to Smith a little later.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Smith," said he. "THAT is my card."

"All the same," replied Smith, gayly. He was ahead.

"It ain't the same to me," said his friend coldly. The farmer dealt next. He was quite awkward, and when he tried to riffle 'em up he made a mess of it. The New Yorker opened it for ten. Everybody stayed, and the farmer raised it. The New Yorker bet after the draw. Smith raised it, and the farmer raised him. Smith's friend dropped out. The farmer had won over two hundred when he showed down his ace full, and Smith angrily slapped down his double ace flush.

"Cuss that joker!" he groaned. "A two-ace flush looked so good I had to bet on it!"

"Why, certainly, he played his hand right," said the New Yorker. This made Smith feel a little better. It's something to be a gambler.

They had a twenty-dollar jackpot. Everybody was excited and somebody would get home broke. They were all in.

"I raise it twenty," cried Smith's friend, peeling off a yellow-backed bill.

The car door opened and a woman, whose countrified air and costume proclaimed her "Hanner," hurried up to them. She gasped in horror when she saw the speedy game in which Paw was indulging.

"Hiram!" she said, sternly, "get right up! You ain't a-goin' to lose our last cent! Now, quit! Yew air gamblin' fur money, an' yew a deekin!"

"Now, Hanner, jest a minnit," begged Hiram. "Set on the arm of the chair here, an' I'll hurry."

Hanner consented, with a disapproving snort, and the game went on. The opener drew two, the farmer one,

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the third man three and the last one. The raising before the draw had been hot and heavy.

"Twenty bet," said Smith. "AND twenty," said Hiram. The New Yorker raised it again. Smith didn't stay.

Then Hanner spoke. "What do them four wimmen in your hand, all alike, mean, Hiram?" she asked, interestedly.

"Shet up!" hissed Hiram. But the shot had told. A limpness seemed to fasten on the others.

"It beats me," said the New Yorker. Then he grinned. "You'd have stung me for twenty more, old pal," he said. Hiram scowled at Hanner.

"That's good," sighed Smith's friend.

Hiram threw his hand into the discard. He had cleaned them up, and he and Hanner left the car at the next stop.

The New Yorker got his overcoat. "Guess I'll toddle into the sleeper and get a snooze," he observed. "See you later, gentlemen."

He got off when Hiram did, but from the Pullman. When the train had pulled out he bought three tickets back to Toledo. Then he looked up Hiram and Hannah.

"Fine for you, Aggie," said he. "That was a cinch. Keep the coin till to-night, Jack, and we'll all eat together."

"I'll certainly be glad to shake this make-up," said "Hanner," plaintively, "and wear my diamonds again. Well, there's one born every minute, boys."

The Troubles of Two Working Girls.

SCENE; the telephone switchboard in the lobby of a Broadway hotel.

CHARACTERS; Annabelle, the Telephone Girl, and Myrtle, "in the business."

MYRTLE—Say, Annabelle, d'yuh think yuh oughter be wearin' yer diamonds in the mornin'? It ain't classy, dear.

ANNABELLE—Yuh betcha life I'm goin' tuh keep right on wearin' 'em. That big blonde countess from Paris up in Suite B wears all her joolry, 'cause I seen her, an' it looks like a countess oughta know!

MYRTLE—D'yuh mean the one what come down here tuh 'phone in a pink silk kimona and a sunburst? A fella who was in the Bon Tons with me, he gotta flash yestidday, an' he says she ain't no more from Paris than I am! He told me she ust tuh rope steers down on her pa's ranch in Texas before she colored her hair!

ANNABELLE—Gee, they must be the goods! while a big fat slob like her just sets back an' lets 'em bring her diamonds! Honest tuh Heaving, it's discouragin'; but I betcha I nail some mark yet, at that, my dear.

MYRTLE—How's the cigar man? Did the old lobster come tuh the scratch an' fall fur the ruby pin?

ANNABELLE—Oh, I had to flag him! I don't mean my Forty-second street one, but the guy on Sixth avenue. I told 'em to beat it. Cheap skates, astin'

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me tuh Mink's, mind yuh! One of 'em tuck me tuh a show, an' just 'cause I was talkin' tuh a young fella who's gotta auto, and of course I can't overlook no bet like that, this guy says, "Gee, them folks on the stage is makin' such a row I can't hear a word yuh say!" I can't see them bum comejians, an' when he went out tuh the bar I just give my other gen'lemen fren' the office, an' hit the trail! He staked me tuh a feed at Rector's, like a perfect gent.

MYRTLE—I'm havin' the grandest time since I got so fren'ly with our manager. He treats me elegant, an' soon's we leave Noo York I'm tuh be featured. His wife might get hep here.

ANNABELLE—What will yuh be featured as?

MYRTLE—Why, just featured, yunno! That's all they do in burlesque. I come out in a swell mil'try soot in the first part, an' sing a song, an' the chorus has tuh sing down tuh me. Them hussies'd like tuh start sumpin' with me. but HE give 'em the hunch not to git gay. I'm gettin' the loveliest noo boots fur my second entrance, when I wear the pink tights—costin' \$20, dear!

ANNABELLE—They most be the goods! Does he stake yuh to the clothes?

MYRTLE (in a lofty tone)—Sure, I got him goin', yunno, 'cause I cud show the letters tuh his family—but I'm a lady and wouldn't do nuthin' like that less'n I was just brung tuh it. He says I got the handsomest pins in the company, an' I guess I have all right, though I ain't a gell that's always cappin' her own game. Legs is everything in burlesque. Well, I'd rather be under the spotlight playin' Miner's as an almost star than back in the row, like I was at Weber's, an' not a line! Them managers is repular grouches. When I went with that Lincoln J. Carter an' played the begger gell, sellin' violets, they made me take off my em'rald necklace an' all my rings. What's the use of bein' in the profession if yuh gotta be treated like that?

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' I see George Leslie an' his wife's back from Lunnon. I seen 'em when I was over last year, the time my fren' the wine man had tuh leave town 'cause Jerome wanted him tuh testify. We had the grandest time! My fren', Mr. Corri, of Lunnon, and George Weedon, was up to their flat. Yunno, George is a perfectly lovely pianner player, too. Oh, yes, he is, dear honest.

ANNABELLE (in 'phone)—Hello! This is 4-11-44! Will I ast the cashier if yuh left a watch with him fur the last quart yuh had last night? I s'pose I kin. Front! Hello! He says send down the six an' yuh'll git the watch! What? Well, I s'pose the extry two is fur a pint fur himself. I can't help whether yer a fren' of the boss or not.

Them mutts gimme a pain!

Hello! No, Genaro an' Bailey ain't stoppin here; this ain't the Union Square! On the level, I don't think they'd be up yet, so I wouldn't go buttin' in if I was yuh! Well yuh git the tip whether yuh want it or not! Darn him! if he goes disturbin' Dave when he's pressin' his brown dress soot, he'll git a swift kick—yunno, Dave's wife is always laughin, at him not lettin' the man do it, but I dunno why he shouldn't. Hello! HELLO! No, there ain't no Mista Barker livin' here; yuh're five blocks off—we ain't got no guests what go tellin' their pasts tuh the noospapaers—don't sass me! I don't have tuh work here; I just do it 'cause I gotta have some excuse fur stayin' away from home. Hello! Well I'll see if she's is in; but she won't come down tuh the 'phone at this hour! Oh! Yuh want her tuh meet yuh at the bank? I guess she kin come down, just wait; Front! My that's his ladi fren' who's in vod-ville, an' she cert'nly needs the money. This must be the fella she was tellin' about! Hello! Well, if our house detective said yuh couldn't come in, let it go at that! Yuh gotta big suite upstairs an' lived there two years, and he throwed yuh out? Come on back. I'll git the lobster discharged! The boss'll go off

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his nut; this old mark buys more booze'n the whole day's trade comes tuh, an' 'cause he had a souse he got in our own bar, this noo Nick Carter gives him the rinkydink an' won't let him come home! There's nothin' but trouble 'round here all the time! (Curtain.)

When Black Mose Met His Waterloo.

DEY ain't nuffin dis side ob Tennessee kin lick mah black Mose," boasted Samson Jones. "I des whispered in his yeah an' he toh' dat Nashville bird clar tuh pieces. Das de kind bird he is."

Old Colonel Mosby caught the enthusiasm of Mose's owner. "Well, he nevah did fail us yet, Samson," he said; "so we all will bet on him to-night. And hyah's a ten dollah bill. Ah'll hand yo' all moh when the main's ovah."

"Yassah, yas, Marse Mosby; de gemmen got no call tuh be scahed, sah. Old Mose goin' bring in de money."

The rivalry between Tennessee and Mississippi was intense. Gentlemen had come to blows lately, the result of angry argument over the merits of the Mississippi brand of gamecock. Birds had been fetched from Knoxville and Memphis, and the champions of these cities laid low by the defenders of Mississippi's glory, headed by black Mose. There had been no return express charges to pay after the battles. Only a few tail feathers were left for the chagrinned Tennesseans to bear sorrowfully away.

A foolish sentiment among the women of Palmetto had made secrecy necessary at present in the matter of championship mains. A preacher, nursing a grouch, because, deserting Palmetto at a former session, he had bet on a Memphis rooster and lost, had so lacked the sporting instinct that he began a crusade against cock fighting.

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"Yas, an' de ve'y clo's he's a-wearin' was win by backin' Mose," said Samson Jones disgustedly. "I ain't got nuffin agin preachers as a whole, but some of em' sho got a heap ob yalla inside em."

Samson lived over in the pine woods, back of the Lee plantation. He cultivated a "goober" patch and a small plot of potatoes, and exercised supervision over a bony, decrepit old white mule, with two bad legs, a coon dog and three game birds of proud lineage. There were hogs running wild through the woods, and these furnished pork in plenty for his table.

Whenever Aunt Sarah honed for a new red dress, or a pound of snuff, and the gin jug needed filling, Samson did a bird up in a sack and went forth to war. There was an abandoned barn a half mile away, and in this the combat was to take place.

Samson was in charge of the arrangements, and he busily made pine pitch torches, with which to guide the strangers over fallen timber and past waterholes. It was January and the rains had made the clay soil soggy. The Nashville sports got to Palmetto on the morning of the fight, and the three bars made up for months of dull trade.

The confident Mississippians, headed by Colonel Mosby and the sheriff, bet the enemy to a standstill even before the pitside was reached. After supper the natives pleaded important lodge business, and work at the office, and all those hoary excuses, to their wives and hustled away to meet the enemy, merrily carousing in the Stonewall Jackson bar.

Many eager black boys headed the parties when it was time to start. Slipping and sliding, they left the road and followed the flickering torches through the woods. Holly and magnolia branches festooned with long gray tree-moss, dripped water on the excited crowd, but they didn't care. The nine strange birds were conveyed by their owners and trainers, the feathered warriors fussing mightily inside the bags which held them.

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Eight other birds were to fight for the other side, including "Meade's Best," which had never yet met defeat. His would be the final struggle, with the pride of Tennessee. The "prelims" were interesting, but they did not stir the blood of the spectators to any great extent.

When the sixth pair was sent into the pit, things warmed up. They were two well-bred ones and put up a rattling go. The betting grew lively, and in the end Tennessee bore off a battered bird almost too far gone for repairs.

At midnight the score was four to four. The champions would settle it, one way or the other.

"Fifty dollars on the black," roared the judge.

"Right back at yo', sah!" shouted a Tennessee man.

The black helper of the Tennessee bird's owner approached Samson. "S'pose yo' all is skairt to bet some mo'?" he said tauntingly.

Samson had bet all his money, but he had the mule. He wagered it against a cash equivalent, Colonel Mosby guaranteeing its value to be at least fifteen dollars.

Then Samson's sporting blood churned in his veins. He bet his house, his goober patch, and four pigs which were not really his own property, although they grunted in his pen, and the two lame gamecocks at home just recovering from a fight.

His brass watch chain and his coat and vest he put up next. Whites and blacks yelled forth bets.

Samson let Mose out of the bag. He stroked Mose, and whispered to him until Mose's beady eyes bulged out aggressively. The battle was on!

With a wild squawk the Tennessee bird whirled upon Mose, striking furiously with his sharp spurs. Mose met him gamely, and a bunch of feathers dropped out where he viciously assaulted Meade's Best.

"Ah got nuffin but mah rabbit's foot left! Yo' cyant lose ef yo' got it!" shouted Samson.

"Took!" howled a black supporter of the other side,

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producing his own. Samson hastily removed his shoes, still encouraging his bird. He bet the shoes.

A great yell of triumph went up from the Tennesseans. Their bird had cut off one of Mose's spurs! The finish was quick. Advancing on the bleeding Mose, the enraged stranger flew up in the air, landed at just the right spot, and cut poor Mose's head half off. Tennessee had won!

Mississippi, broke, with the enemy's joyful cheers mounting upward, turned on Samson. They may have left out a few insulting epithets, but only because in their just anger they overlooked them.

Samson gathered up the relics of his dead breadwinner. He passed over the rabbit's foot, his clothes and his shoes. Aunt Sarah would have no home, and he was a disgraced man.

"Dey's jes' two fings Ah wants tuh ax yo' white men," he said finally, "jes' two."

"And what's that," asked one.

"Gimme a nickel foh a chaw tobacker," replied Samson sadly, "an' put on mah tombstone 'He's daid, but not out betted.'"

The Creating of a Top Line Act.

"Nothing doin' again today?" asked Flossie Collins. Her husband, the other half of the comedy sketch team of Collins & Collins, shut the door of their room, before he replied.

"I got a week in Kansas City in August," said he, gloomily. "That's sumpin'."

"Well, I don't call it sumpin', Mr. Collins!" exclaimed Flossie, angrily. "I s'pose you mean to set here till August an' then jump out there, don't you? Now, in the future I'll see the agents. Ef you'd get out mornin's 'stead of settin' round playin' pinochle over in the s'loon, we'd be workin' now. In the mornin' is the time to see agents. Nobody but office boys is there afternoons. An' it was told to me by certain parties that yestidday when you told me you done the rounds you set in a music publisher's shootin' craps all day!"

Frank Collins scowled. "Well, I win two dollars," he returned, peevishly. "Quit hollerin'. You can be heard all over the house."

"Let 'em hear!" shouted Flossie. She took a pillow from the bed and hurled it furiously at her sponse. "Don't speak to me!" she went on, adding rather inconsistently: "What salary did you take for Kansas City?"

"None your business!" he replied, kicking the pillow viciously. "You can get a new par'ner! I'm sick of fightin'. Good-by."

He was gone before Flossie could think of anything

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biting to say. She slid off the bed, where she had been sitting, to the floor, burying her head in the remaining pillow.

"Let him go!" she sobbed. "I don't care. Him an' me might's well quit now as any time. He never did think nothin' of me. If he did he wouldn't a held out that two yestidday."

The boarders were going down to dinner. She could hear them joking each other outside in the hall, and the stairs creaking under their feet. "Hello, Frank!" a voice called out.

Flossie got up rapidly, trembling for fear he would go away. Dabbing a little powder over her face, she opened the door. Frank was standing by the stair rail. "I—I just wanted to ask if you got the key," she faltered, trying not to cry.

The key was in the door, as they both knew. Frank looked foolish. "I'll come in and look for it—honey," said he. "I didn't mean what I said, kid. I'm sorry." Thereupon Collins and Collins made it up, and held a little consultation as to ways and means. They had not worked in five weeks, and Mrs. De Shine, the landlady, had ceased to smile upon them in her erstwhile friendly manner.

"We'd better go down and feed," suggested Frank. "The first table's eating now. If we miss the second they won't be anything good left, and I think I smell steak."

In the lower hall they met Mrs. De Shine and Fido, her beloved poodle. Moved by policy, Flossie carressed Fido, who snapped at her in the usual way. "Don't rag the dolling, Mis' Collins," said his owner, "Fido's tur'ble pertic'ler who pats him."

There was a distinct chill in her voice. As recently as lunchtime the boss had addressed Flossie by her first name, and she read the handwriting on the wall.

"Come on," whispered Frank. He read it also.

Mrs. De Shine spoke again. "When yuh folks come

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out, kin'ly step into my room," she remarked, "I'd like a few words."

"Oh, cert'nly," replied Flossie, endeavoring to look as if she wasn't fully aware of what the words would be about.

"What'll I say to her?" Frank was plainly disturbed, as they sat down.

"Oh, wait'll I think. I don't b'lieve I want nothin' to eat. I ain't well," said Flossie, weakly.

But Frank figured that if they were to lose a home he could bear it better on a square meal.

"Slide the steak down to this end, pal," said he, "and chase the bread along. Susy, me'n my wife'll take cawfee, an' hustle up some more potatoes."

"Yessir," answered the slavey, obediently. Then she whispered to Flossie.

"Scuse me, Mis' Collins," she said, "but I hearn the boss sayin' she wouldn't wait no longer. I ain't buttin' in, but I thought you'd like to know."

"You're a good gell, Susy, an' I appreciate it," returned Flossie, in the same confidential tone. "Do yuh s'pose they's any use handin' her a talk?" ..

"My, she's pie," said Susy, with a snicker, "just con her along, that's all." Flossie breathed easier. She even ate a little, but a forboding of evil sat heavily upon her mind. "You tell her we got twenty weeks' work, beginnin' in a week," she said to Frank. "Mebbe we kin stall her off for a week."

"Leave it to me. I'm the fixin' kid," said he. The Property Man, the only boarder who stayed the year around, had finished his dinner excepting a second cup of coffee, and he now engaged in general conversation. "Where do you go from here?" he asked Irma Bender, the contortionist.

"Goin' on the Melville Park Circuit," said she. "He's a per'fly grand fella to work for, too. I was treated swell last season."

Leona Wilbur, who had an act with her "pickaninies" all a long way over seven, reached a long arm in

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Flossie's direction in search of the sugar.

"I was in Norris' today and I seen the Four Jugling Skillets," she observed. "They was tellin' me that you got eight weeks 'round New York on the same bills with them. Take my tip, my dear, an' don't tell nothing to Pansy Skillet you don't want gabbed to the hull profession. She's a natural born knocker, an' I'd say it to her face."

"Eight weeks—why, I don't know what—I mean a'course Flossie had stopped in time to conceal her wonder. What did Pansy Skillet mean by saying that to Leona?" Miss Wilbur attacked one of Mrs. De Shine's famous home-pickled beets, known to all vaudeville.

"I wisht we had eight weeks around here," said Mirabelle Browning, of the Musical Brownings, with a wistful glance. Mrs. De Shine had entered with Fido. Flossie took a chance.

"We got eight here, and twelve solid weeks on the parks!" she exclaimed boldly, "beginning next week! We held out for our salary, too, an' got it. We never could see this taking less money in the off season!"

"Well, you got a good man bookin' the act," remarked John Kutupp, late comedian in a burlesque troupe, "that's the answer, every time." Mrs. De Shine assumed a pleasant smile. It would be folly to antagonize a team with such brilliant prospects ahead. She promptly made up a new book of the affair. "Susy, Mis' Collins ain't had no meat at all!" she began. "G'wan out an' ast the cook fur a real tender piece fur her. Mista Collins, is they anything yuh want? Say the word. Maggie De Shine was never stingy, an' it's well knowed that I set things on this here table yuh can't get nowhere else."

"That's no lie," murmured the Property Man, "it's sure the limit."

"Did yuh speak, Mister Johnson?" queried the boss, sharply. The Property Man said he had been simply

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agreeing with her statement. Frank kicked his wife, under the table. "Keep it up, kid," said he.

"I could go against a nice dish of strawberries, if you got any lyin' around loose, Mis' De Shine," he said, aloud, "and Flossie loves 'em, don't you, Floss?"

"I cert'nly do." Flossie felt with Frank that they might as well get all they could under the improved conditions. The boss had made her bluff, and now she was in for it. Strawberries for two meant a supply for the other boarders as well.

"Listen, here. S'pose now I put yuh folks in numba twenty, fur the same price." she began, "an' let the berries go. I didn't see no good ones, anyway, tuh-day, but the dear knows I never make no brag I dont make good on—soot yerselves."

"Tell you what," answered Frank, "we'll just take a whole soot of rooms. You got the three with the bath the Great Allegetti had when he was playin' Mactor's—an' we kin afford em' now. I b'lieve in bein' comfortable."

Flossie gasped at the extent of his nerve, but Mrs. De Shine was impressed. Her manner seemed to change and a respect that hitherto had been lacking took the place of her former arrogant air. The boarders buzzed among themselves. The Collinses were flying high, evidently. "Yuh couldn't find nothin' better at the San't Wreckus Hotel itself," said Mrs. De Shine, affably, "an' I just want tuh say right here, I appreciate yuh stayin' here with me, same as when yuh was doin' twelve shows a day in a Third Avenoo dump. Ef all vodeville people was the same, an' remembered them what stuck by 'em before they rose, I'd have a Broadway hotel."

The landlady was overcome by emotion. With a corner of her apron she wiped a tear away, at the same time keeping tab on the copious amount of butter to which an acrobat at one end helped himself.

"Kin'ly rec'lect that butter cost money, Johnny Twister," she added, "an' some folks better settle what

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they owe before gorgin' on the fat of the land!"

"Yes'm," murmured Mr. Twister, unabashed, bolting a large potato whole in his haste to depart before she said more.

"Yuh'll have them berries for breakfast an' Susy'll take it up," she told Flossie, privately; "anything yuh feel like, ast fur it. Them rooms'll be got ready in ten minutes, my dear."

Collins & Collins went upstairs.

"I guess that was poor!" Frank sat on their one trunk, chortling merrily. Flossie cast aside all care.

"I'll do for a few days," she observed, "an' we might get some work by then. But won't she be lookin' for our names on the bills?"

"We'll say we took the place of a team that was cancelled," Frank assured her; "that's easy. We got her goin' now, an' let's make it strong. But I can't see where that dame got her twelve weeks idee."

A soft knock interrupted him. It was Leona Wilbur. She carried a white satin blouse, which she was in process of beautifying for the adornment of one of her robust "picks."

"Lock the door," she whispered. "Say, you done fine. Didn't you ketch on to why I was making that crack?"

The Collins' begged Leona to go on.

"The Juggling Skillets ain't no friends to any of us," she commenced. "Tuh-day I met 'em like I said. I was up there after three weeks' work, and I got it, and I'm satisfied, because, thank Gawd, I kin make good wherever they put me on a bill. The Skillets come out of the private office, and Pansy Skillet begins hollerin' how they got twelve weeks, and it's too bad I didn't have a good 'nough act to get more dates. She's a cat! Then I seen you goin' in, Frank, and the boys says, 'Nothing today, but call again.'

"I got to thinking about them blamed Skillets, an' goes back, and the clerk tells me all they got is four

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weeks in Ohio, on the dime vodeville circuit! See how they lie."

"I don't see how we come in," commented Flossie.

"The Skillets are livin' here," replied Leona, triumphantly. "They was at the first table to-night, or you'd seen 'em. I said that about you so's to make the hull gang good an' sore 'cause they'll think you got the choice time, an' their big turn couldn't. See? Anyway, it done you good, at that. I won't breathe it, an' old De Shine fell."

Susy arrived with the tidings that the rooms were ready. The pleased slavey congratulated her friends, little suspecting on what thin ice they were traveling. "Mis' De Shine run out an' bought a silk quilt!" she announced, "an' she tuck the curtains outer the Juglin' Skillets' rooms. They're away playin' their show. Say, Mis' Collins, did yuh ever feel the need of a maid? Seems like yuh oughter have a dresser, playin' them swell dates."

Flossie promised Susy she would reflect upon the advisability of having a retainer. Leona assisted her friends in moving. She was fond of them both and their troubles were fully known to her. She left to play her own show, thinking deeply. It seemed as though a plan for their further relief was lurking in her mind, but she could not quite figure it out. In the liveliest part of her own turn, with the audience roaring at the antics of the loggy black picks, engaged in a spirited buck dancing finish, Leona found the way out. She hardly waited to take her three bows, and left half her makeup on in her hurry to get back to the house.

"De Shine's liable to be astin' to see your contracts," she exclaimed, bursting in upon the Collinses, now elegantly quartered in the suite which only high-salaried headliners and managers ever occupied, "and I bet anything we kin show 'em on the level!"

"How? Fake 'em?" asked Frank, eagerly. He had manufactured them before this.

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"Agents'll go on overlooking a team for years," said Leona, earnestly; but if the team goes across to London and makes good then the agents here go crazy over 'em. I got all the European contracts I had up to 1908, that I ain't going to play, 'cause they ain't for 'nough money. We kin put Collins & Collins after Leona Wilbur, by squeezin' it in, boost the twenty pounds salary to a hundred and twenty, and that ought to look pretty sweet."

"But we ain't all workin' together," objected Frank. Flossie silenced him.

"You'd go to work with anybody if you got anything fur it, wouldn't you?" she demanded. "G'wan, Leona!"

"We kin lump the two acts!" cried Leona, warming to the subject. "We go up, flash them contracts, and if we don't get a chance to stick on this side I'm off my nut, an' it's set on pretty steady. Your trunk scenery'll do. We use the same drop, put ten minutes to the act, and in the place in your act where he thinks you're the woman what wants to buy a piano and you think he's the manager of the show come to rehearse you, me an' the picks comes in, does our stuff, you finish the comedy and we all do a dancin' finish."

Frank rose "Leona, you're an ace!" said he. "Get the contracts! Leave that to me. I'll be on the job at eight in the morning, an' you gals stay home and dope out what to cut. I got some new stuff that'll be a knockout, too. Say, I feel like a new man!"

"We only got to keep our nerve up," said Flossie. "These rooms seem to gimme a hunch we're goin' to land yet!" Leona examined the silk quilt admiringly

"Mebbe we'll be sleeping under this kind every day before long," she remarked. "It'll take them Skillets down a coupla pegs, all right."

The ladies helped Frank array himself in the

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morning. His street clothes were in bad shape, so his stage wardrobe was investigated. A natty light gray suit, patent leather shoes, with gray tops and a straw hat completed his outfit. A somewhat loud patterned shirt and a neat bow tie fixed him nicely.

The breakfast, with strawberries, came up at an early hour, borne by Susy. She reported that the whole house was gossiping at the luxury of Collins & Collins. Leona went down to breakfast where she listened delightedly to the grouchy comments of the Juggling Skillets and other envious performers.

Luckily Frank met the most important agent of all as he got into the elevator to ride to his office. It was not easy to get away when the visitor had caught him. In his own office the agent had many ways of eluding the most determined pursuit. "I'll probably have a park date very soon, old man," said the agent, "but nothing right now."

"Oh, I only got two weeks open," returned Frank, carelessly. "Better take us off the list, because we sail with the big act in two weeks, you know. Just got our English and German contracts."

The agent regarded him intently. So little attention had he paid to Frank on former visits, that he began to wonder what the fellow meant.

"Big act!" he repeated, as they got out at his floor. "what big act? Thought you did a comedy sketch with somebody?"

He noted Frank's clothes. "Front" goes a long way, and the stage suit had been well kept by the industrious Flossie. It might be possible that he had overlooked something.

"Used to." Frank did his best to convey the impression that he was perfectly at ease. "But, of course, when Leona Wilbur went with us we put in new features. Six people now. I got a little time out West"—he thought of the Kansas City week—"but we'll cancel. Well good day!"

"Stop! Come in and have a smoke," insisted the

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agent. He felt puzzled. "Let's see your contracts. Want to be careful of those Johns on the other side. They're not like we are."

Nonchalantly Frank produced the papers. He felt a wild desire to peep at them first to see if the changes still stood the white light of day. His heart pounded as the agent perused them.

"Six hundred dollars!" he said at last, looking up.

"Holy Moses! Who got you that price?"

Frank smiled wisely. "It ain't hard when you got the goods," he returned. "We had to get it from over there, too. I never had no decent money handed me here."

"How about seeing this act?" asked the agent abruptly.

"I couldn't say till I see the ladies," said Frank, guardedly. "We're stoppin' on Fourteenth street. I'll go down and ask 'em about it."

The agent made up his mind to find out what the act was.

"I'll call," said he.

Frank raced home. Hurriedly the ladies strewed knickknacks about their smart apartments to make it look homelike. When the agent got there one look convinced him that the contracts were on the level. Vaudeville people could never keep up such style on small money. He made up his mind that these persons should come under his sheltering booking wing, if only because they appeared to have no desire to do so. It was almost a matter of personal pride. Four days later on a certain stage he saw a dress rehearsal of Collins, Wilbur & Collins and their Ethiopian wonders.

The company worked with such dash and vim that he viewed their act approvingly. It appealed to him. Agents are but human after all. He began to feel a friendly interest in the talented group.

"Look here; you stay over here," he said at the

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finish. "You've got a nice little act. Six hundred's all right in Europe, but it's a hard game. They cut your time down and crab a good turn, and the country's an awful thing. Now I'll get you four hundred a week here and give you ten weeks around New York, eight more in the East and six on the Morpheum Circuit, West. You can't beat that. Yes or no?"

"Yes!" shouted the trio.

"Then come up and sign," said he, "and I'll buy lunch for the bunch—all except the picks."

Collins, Wilbur & Collins are topping hills now. It's all in the way you go about it.

The Finish of Daffy the Dip.

"DAFFY THE DIP" was in bad way. He lacked the price of a "shell" of hop, and he had a yen that had crawled into his very soul and thence sent out a wail for the dope. He couldn't get his mind straight on anything. "A guy can't get no coin when he's dyin' fur a smoke," he said to himself as he stood outside the long dark passage way which led to Canton Willie's place in Pell street. His nostrils hungrily sucked in the faint odor which came from within.

He tried to think out a plan to get just enough for one little card. A few pills would brighten his wits, and with the night crowds out buying things for presents, there was always a chance.

Daffy in his day—a brief three years ago—had trained with the headliners in crookdom. He had a prouder title then. Now the old gang gave him the high sign to keep on moving when he approached one of them, because the hop had made him a dead one.

He wept snuffingly at the memory of a day-old snub. "Why, I puts that guy where he is," he thought, bitterly. "He couldn't slide his mitt intuh a flour bar'l when I knows him in Cincy (Cincinnati), an' I shows him how tuh git big coin. An' he hands me the ice pitcher now. I wisht I was dead, an' no kid. Hully chee! this yen is rippin' out me insides. On the dead, I t'ink I'm off me nut fur fair. Mebbe they got me pat on that name."

He shivered, coughing a little. His overcoat was "in hock," and thin cotton underwear, topped by an old Summer shirt, makes poor covering. The wind

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blows up, filled with a river damp chill, through Chinatown in winter.

Inside Canton Willie's men and women sprawled on straw bunks cooking fragrant, satisfying pills of bubbling brown. In fancy he rolled a luscious one on the bowl of the pearl inlaid pipe which belonged to the swell layout you hired if you had money.

The fat policeman, swinging his club, came down the middle of the street, glancing idly to either side. He spotted Daffy the Dip. "On yer way, there! G'wan out of that, or I'll run yuh in!" he called out, gruffly, and Daffy, sick with the yen and shaking with ague, fled.

He ran a little way, and then, seeing that the big copper had turned into Doyers street, he halted, hiding himself in the shadows of a doorway.

A man and a women came strolling along. They were visitors, seeing the sights. The woman carried a silver bag, one of the kind that are an invitation to crime. The man was talking. He said you could find hop joints, and fan tan games, and Chinese poker, if you "knew someone." You couldn't get in unless you were "all right."

"Oh, I wish we could see a hop joint!" she chattered. "My! Wouldn't it be lovely?"

"If I knew where to find a certain plain clothes man, we could," he said. Daffy's heart beat. This mark might be his salvation. He hurried after the pair and touched the man on the arm.

"Listen, I hearn youse sayin' about a joint, see?" he began eagerly. "I kin fix it fur youse. Is it a bet?"

The woman shrank away, frightened, but the man laughed.

"What will it set me back?" he inquired, looking Daffy over.

The latter paused an instant while he tried to think. Supposing he said too much and the guy got mad, or, again, if too little he'd be regretting it later. Hop was

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two-bits a card. Three cards meant release from troubling over the problem of existence, and a revel in pleasant, drowsy dreams, in which coppers did not live, nor contemptuous oldtime friends laugh cruelly at a fellow who was down.

"It'll cost youse two bucks!" he said. "An' I'll show youse troo."

"Oh, do let's go!" begged the woman. The man yielded, and told Daffy to lead on. He asked why the latter trembled so. Was he hungry? Daffy said yes that was it; not even the chance to sniff the steam of a bowl of chop suey in the last two days.

At Canton Willie's Daffy led them into the smelly, red curtained laundry off the long passage.

"Hey, Wo Chung!" he cried, and a Chinaman appeared. "They're good people, pals of mine," he remarked, nodding to the visitors. "Where's Willie?"

"Inside. Go' 'head!" answered the Chinaman, uninterestedly.

Canton Willie was very polite. He wore American clothes and much jewelry and had a familiar, sociable air that shocked the female visitor. The man handed Daffy two rumpled dollar bills. "You go and get a square meal," he advised kindly. "I was broke once myself."

But Daffy, unable to longer restrain himself, left them abruptly to carry on their investigations of the slums alone. He got a bunk, a layout and dope from Charlie Lee, who worked for Willie, and began operations at once. The poison of some eight pills was working well when the visitors, led about by Willie, found his bunk.

The man was a good sort, and he made up his mind that it was a shame to see a young fellow killing himself. He spoke earnestly to Daffy.

"You get up and get a good meal," he said. "If you smoke hop now on an empty stomach it'll kill you."

He didn't know much about the matter, and when

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he decided to be charitable he hated folks opposing him.

"On yer way; don't bodder me, cul," said Daffy, sleepily, cooking another pill in the flame of the little oil lamp.

The man became angry. He commanded Daffy to get up that very minute. Daffy wouldn't budge.

Then the man informed Canton Willie that he was a doctor, which was a lie, and that if this man died here it'd close the place for good. "And I'll have you raided if you don't put him out!" he added.

That settled it.

Willie called his minions, and they threw poor Daffy, warmed and happy in his bunk, out into the cold of Pell street.

The woman thought her escort was too noble to live, and said so in his ear.

He told Daffy about a place where hop fiends were cured. He should be fed and clothed and then go there. They would feed him now. But Daffy turned on him, choking with passion. "Youse fixed me clock, ain't youse?" he shouted wildly; "gits me trun out the only joint I kin git in since the gang gits sore on me an' gives the Chinks the office! I don't want no habit cured, an' no meals! Take that!"

He whirled on the man and struck him in the face; then, shrieking like a maniac, he ran up the street. The woman screamed.

"That's what we get for being charitable!" said the man, viciously, feeling his aching jaw tenderly. "Confounded ungrateful gutter swine!"

"Yes, Freddie, come away quick!" she cried, clutching him.

They pinched Daffy before morning and he went to the Island as a "vag." One day he died over there. But then he had to end some way. Still, charity applied with the axe is bad business.

The Code of the Hills.

BIG DAN stopped the outfit on the edge of Buck Creek, where there was plenty of wood and water. The two tenderfeet from the East couldn't go on. The fat man's legs were stiff and sore, and the young expert, who knew the mining game from books, was down and out.

They had crawled along the trail since seven in the morning, through snow and mud, with packhorses sinking deep into the soft muck of the mud holes at every half mile. That meant tugging at a mule's head, up to the hips in freezing slime, and finally uncinching the pack ropes, conveying the load to dry land, and by united effort hauling the mule after it. The tenderfeet had worked for once, to the tune of a string of half Nez Perce and ordinary Idaho mountain talk from Dan that shocked the young expert and excited the fat man's admiration.

Had the Easterners not insisted on lugging along such truck as sleeping bags, air pillows and a foolish plenitude of clothing they might have ridden light and been at the big camp by this time, instead of only two days from the wagon road.

"Oh, I'm awful sick!" groaned the fat man. The expert wasn't well, either, but after Dan had unsaddled the cayuses and unpacked the two mules they revived considerably. Seeing this, and having had previous experience with tenderfeet who renigged when work faced them, Dan addressed the fat man sourly:

"Seein' as you guys is better," said he, "you just fill the coffee pot and rustle wood, and if you want that New York tent put up cut yourselves a couple o' poles. I'm goin' to turn out them animals. Find me the hobbles in that alforjas, Boston!"

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The expert looked at Dan angrily. Why must he take orders from this vulgar packer, with his dirty shirt and ragged overalls, and his arrogant ways, bred of his contempt for the man who changed his socks and shirt once a day? "We hired you!" exclaimed the expert. "Why can't you do it?"

The fat man was frightened. They were a long jump from human kind, out in this wild Salmon River range, and this ruffian might flash a gun.

But Dan didn't. He laughed.

"You back East Willies are sure a sportin' lot," he observed. "But listen here: I'm out to show you a nickel prospect, not to be your hired gal! No one but a bum tenderfoot would show the yaller streak you got in your hide! Now get them hobbles and side hobble the black mule and the buckskin. The others 'll stay with 'em. An' put the bell on my old Bally. Savvy?"

He looked unpleasant.

"For God's sake, don't shoot!" cried the fat man in terror. The expert's face had worn a string of colors as a feeling of shame surged over him.

"I don't pack no gun, Mister Pittsburg," replied Dan, "'ceptin' my 42-70. It's on my saddle, an' what I use when I need meat."

The expert, having read Diamond Dick, among his other preparations, realized that this might be called having the drop on his man. Awkwardly he produced a new pattern Colt. "Hold up your hands!" he yelled. With the last word a sharp hunk of snow and ice, thrown by Dan, hit him in the face. He lost his balance in the slippery mud and slid backwards, down into Buck Creek.

The fat man, hopeless now of supper, because he couldn't bake bannocks or cook rice without it burning before half done, sat down on a snowy log and cried. Dan calmly turned his back, rummaged among the horseshoeing outfit for the hobbles, and went off with them. The expert heard him cursing at the black mule, so, timidly—wet and subdued—he came up the bank, and between them both tenderfeet, handling the axe with unskilled

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fingers, cut dead branches from the pines and made a fire.

Miserably they huddled close together by the blaze and discussed Dan. "These people haven't a decent instinct," declared the fat man. "It's a wonder he didn't kill you, Jack. He has the look of a criminal."

"And a man in Pioneerville says he's married to a squaw," replied the expert, as if that settled the matter of their guide's low character.

It was dark when Dan came back and curtly said he'd make the bread and fry the bacon, but they must do the rest. The expert rooted in the "kitchen" alforjas and found the cans of butter, milk, jam and other delicacies he had provided. Dan would eat nothing but bacon, bread and coffee and a tin cup of rice. The expert's gun was not publicly displayed, and Dan said nothing about it.

Next morning, although Dan urged them on to a dryer camping place, neither felt fit to travel. So he took his rifle and fared forth to look for a deer. So far he had not treated his companions with fresh meat. An hour after he had started up the steep mountain down which they had wearily ridden they heard two shots. Then four or five more in quick succession.

"Those people love to kill," said the fat man, rubbing his sore leg. They had a serious talk about Dan.

"A man who isn't clean, who doesn't bathe frequently, cannot possibly feel as we do or possess our instincts." The expert elevated his nose as he glanced at Dan's "other shirt," airing on a branch near by. "This fellow is simply an animal."

* * *

It was night, and the tenderfeet had fed upon their canned stuff and coffee, despairing of tackling that problem, the bread. Dan came into camp, very slowly, as if tired. He wearily cooked himself a meal and afterward sat looking at the fire, drying his steaming miner's boots. The expert had spread a canvas pack cover on top of his tent—Dan hadn't raised it, so they slept outside—and crawled into his sleeping bag.

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The fat man was a garrulous creature, and lonesome, so he endeavored to make Dan converse. "Are you not well?" he asked.

"I'm well enough," said Dan, moodily, "but I done a bad job to-day; shot at a buck and broke his jaw. The critter got away in the down timber an' went, hell bent fur 'lection, down acrost the little bench below here, an' up the creek. I kep' follerin', shootin', but I lost him. I never done that before.

The fat man was sympathetic. "Oh, you'll get another easy enough. I wouldn't fret over it," said he.

"I got to find that buck," said Dan.

"For goodness' sake, why?" inquired the fat man, amused.

"The critter can't eat or drink with a busted jaw—that's why," replied the guide. "If I don't ketch him he'll wander, starvin', till he plumb gives out."

"Do you think you'll find one deer among a thousand?" The fat man was laughing. "And what's a deer, anyway?"

Dan was silent, while the fat man reflected on the idiocy of such a person. At dawn Dan was off. He found a lick with "deer sign" all about it, and fresh tracks in the mud. And there were dark blood spots in a little bank of snow. They trailed off into the slide rock below.

That night he watched the deer in the moonlight, as they came to the lick, and does with their fawns and here and there a buck. But the wounded one was not among them.

The second morning the fat man kicked. He said they wouldn't wait around on account of a blamed deer. "You'll wait, or lose a nickel prospect," answered Dan, grimly. A light snow began to fall, and the three put in a dull day, Dan going out after the stock to see that they were near the bunch grass where he had left them, while the other two stayed in camp and swore.

Late that night, as the wind blew the man-scent to the nostrils of the pretty creatures tongueing the salt rock, a big buck, with half his head hanging limp and mangled,

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staggered out into the little open space. The man behind the big rock fired, and the suffering beast dropped heavily. His fellows scampered off, crashing through the stunted green cottonwoods and pines.

Dan came forth and viewed the dead buck. It was not far to camp, and he had his knife. Should he take some meat? "Nope, them guys shan't eat you, buckie," he said quietly. "I'll sort of bury you here."

He dragged the buck some distance and left him in a hole in the rocks.

* * *

"Well, thank the Lord, we're going to move!" breathed the fat man next morning, as they broke camp. "Really, this man is a lunatic instead of a criminal. Oh"—he raised his voice—"did you get the deer?"

"Oh, go and die," said Dan, with a scowl.

The Political Beginning of Solly McGee.

REPUTATION is a mere matter of opinion. Some finicky persons insist upon so conducting themselves that their own may be good, with no mud-splashes upon it, while others go in for a reputation of any old sort. That was the way Solly McGee felt—he wanted folks to know of him, to mention his name, pleasantly, as they did Yom Kippur or the Seventeenth of March, or unpleasantly, as they did the Tsar, or Kinsky the sweat-shop man, whom every one in his set on Pike street hated for his meannesses.

Solly yearned for fame, and it came not. The worst time of all was as Election Day grew near, and the whole district paraded about, while fellows whom he had licked in their younger days were made district captains, and assistant captains, and all variety of political helpers. He would have given a finger or so for the four weeks of brief authority held by a captain's helper, who could order the common herd around, and wait in eager attendance upon the Leader, at the clubhouse.

But Solly could never keep his mind made up as to which party he would ornament by his presence. The blood of his Irish father and his Jewish mother clashed within him always, causing him to waver in his opinions so that neither side would bother with him. It was bitterly humiliating to reflect that while thousands of voters were spoken to caressingly, their families inquired for, their lightest wish respected,

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at this time, he alone was left to do as he pleased, a person not worth effort on the part of Democrat or Republican.

Even the Socialists scorned to waste oratory upon this political maverick. He registered, and beyond a joking challenge or so from either side, no one considered his vote important enough to fight over. And on every side his neighbors brought back word of the terrific battle which their brave captain waged when the shameless opposition workers had tried to prove these neighbors' papers irregular. Once a Morgan man had buttonholed Solly, sternly inquired how long he had lived in the house of Abraham Adamosky, and how many other men slept in his bed as well as he. But a Democratic captain had come along—Solly had just succeeded in convincing himself that the country's interests would best be served if he voted the Democratic ticket—laughingly whispered to the Morgan inspector, who looked at Solly, laughed, and walked off.

Others could joy in the privilege of a day or so in the station-house, with plenty of grub and a pleasing warmth in one's cell, until Their Party got them out, with no work to do during that lazy holiday, but not Solly. It was tough lines. He angrily withdrew his support from the Tammany ranks, and became violently Republican for an hour and a half, when he found that every man over twenty-one in his house excepting himself had been bidden to a feast that evening, at which a keg of beer and mounds of food would tempt the appetites of the guests.

The Socialists had a ticket, for which they worked as hard and enthusiastically as if it really amounted to something, and they made speeches and burned red-fire, and drove some weary old horses about, drawing the trucks full of speakers who labored for the Cause.

Solly rung in with these earnest-souls by cheerfully offering to circulate through the crowds to stir up applause, and help beat off both Republicans and

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Democrats when the Gorillas bore down upon the Socialist trucks, intent on breaking up the meeting.

For four nights, as soon as his long day in the barber shop of Cohen Bros., where he trimmed the beards of the old "poppa guys," as he disrespectfully termed the various soiled old men who dug the price of this attention out of a store of pennies craftily cached in a once white sock. Solly's unstable mind reeked with Socialism, because at last a man who was not aware of the universal contempt in which Solly's vote was held, took him privately to a coffee and cake saloon, fed and watered him, and explained that Solly's vote was needed and needed badly.

Saturday night before election Solly worked late in the shop. He shaved a Republican captain, and the captain, who had noted Solly busily legging it with pitchers of water for the Socialist speakers to cool the fires which burned within them, became curious. "Made up your mind yet?" he inquired. "A smart feller like youse shouldn't let them anarchists con youse." Solly smiled amiably.

"I ain't the only one," said he, and he named several voters on whom the captain had lavished some "sugar," with \$2 apiece (or three for \$5, where the "constit" brought recruits with him), due on Election Day, considering them roped and tied to his party.

He paid for his shave, and left, thinking hard. When Solly came out the captain hailed him, and he talked in a low tone for ten minutes. "Git a little sense intuh yer nut, an' I can use youse, see?" he urged. "I kin see where we've overlooked a bet."

He offered \$20 in real money for a certain service, and Solly agreed to deliver the goods. At last he was as good as any other man, and better. His bribe was bigger. That he had been, warned, on pain of a term at "Larry's Farm," to be silent, was the only sad feature. It would be so fine to show the hoi polloi that he was no lobster.

Discretion prompts that the exact location of

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Solly's captain's polling place be not too closely described, for the good of all concerned. The man who owned the kosher chicken establishment, and joyfully pouched his \$60 for its use on registration and election days, would need a new door next day. It was a good enough door when the ballot box was set against it, but a half hour later, as the gloomy dawn of a rainy election grew lighter, a large round hole was cut in it, through which a hand might reach a ballot as it was cast.

The hand belonged to Solly. Suddenly a trusted aid appeared, who sat on the other side of the door, his eyelashes dusting the edge of the hole as he watched for the folded papers as they dropped down. Solly held a pad and pencil, and a signal from out in front warned him of the identity of the voter—(of the 424 in the precinct both Democrats and Republicans knew every man). and the damning evidence of which way each had voted went down on the pad after the watchful Solly had calmly inspected the marks. What happened to the deceivers who took Republican sugar and threw their votes to the Socialists was too horrible to relate—but they got theirs.

And next year, showing the fickleness of Fate, Solly worked no longer in the shop. He played the races instead, and the leader gave him tips—good ones, too. He was a district captain, having underneath him the very man who had given him his chance. And everybody in the neighborhood greets Solly McGee respectfully as he goes about with the Leader and looks wise. You can't keep a good man down.

How the Soubrettes Broke a Lease.

BIRDIE and Mignon were up against it. They had a long lease on an expensive apartment in a classy uptown hotel, and it was nothing but kick all the time.

The restaurant, represented by the smart looking manager as a place where the most delightful of meals might be secured, was an awful thing. A cockroach had hastened over the edge of Birdie's breakfast tray, appearing from under a plate of limp and smoky toast, and sent the poor girl into violent hysterics, so that when she reached rehearsal her nerves were in a dreadful state. This was on a Monday. At dinner, when the ladies dined alone, a family of small but active ants ran about the white linen and nicely polished silver. It was most unpleasant.

Tuesday was cleaning day, when a flock of servants unfamiliar with the English language, but gifted with an almost uncanny knowledge of the whereabouts of alcoholic liquids, invaded the rooms, under direction of the maid. They cleaned thoroughly in the vicinity of the cellarette filled with liqueurs and the cupboard which held the whisky. The maid swiped, at odd times, various lace trimmed articles of lingerie; the scrubwoman who washed the tiled bathroom and made its nickel appliances shiny collected bedspreads and sheets; she was evidently a practical person.

The hotel furnished "service," and all the guests needed to do was to tip the servants an amount for which they might have hired a couple of minions to work exclusively for them.

HOW THE SOUBRETTES BROKE A LEASE.

Birdie and Mignon had furnished their bijou apartment very prettily. It was all in olive green, with pale rose walls. It contrasted well with Mignon's blond locks and Birdie's Spanish beauty.

But you can't eat walls. "We simply can't get a decent thing to eat in the place," mourned Birdie. "And if the servants would only drink the wine which a friend of mine, who sells it, sends up—but they won't! They lick up our booze and our liqueurs, and we have to pay real money for 'em. And the rent's so high.

"Well, get out," advised the listener. "It's a furnished flat, ain't it?"

"My gracious, no!" said Mignon sadly. "It's all our furniture, and we're on a lease. They're always promising to do better, but they don't. And I can hardly do my dance, the way I feel. We'll just have to live there till we die." She wept two big tears, and Birdie cut in with a sniffle. "We wish we were dead," she declared. The friend began to laugh. Then he said he had a plan, and when he had disclosed it, the three burst into wild laughter.

"Bill, it's the limit, but it's grand," giggled Birdie.

* * *

It was nearly midnight before the show was over and the girls had washed off their make-up and got into street clothes. They swept into the hotel office, attended by three heavy gentlemen in well-cut overcoats, with their collars turned up. Behind them followed a large blond lady, regal in a long coat of sable and a squatty, slanting hat of the very latest mode. With her walked two small gentlemen, of most respectable appearance.

Two larger gentlemen, escorting a husky brunette lady in prune colored velvet, with a plentitude of ermine and diamonds, brought up the rear.

The manager complacently watched the party squeeze into the elevator. "Why ain't all actresses like that?" he asked of the clerk. "See their friends, all rich, of course, and elegantly dressed. Gives a place plenty of

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tone. We throw any old kind of con at those girls, and they stand for it. I hate the sort of guest that insists on his rights, eternally. And anyway, they know they've got to stick that lease out."

"Ting, ling, ling, a-ling!" went the 'phone by the clerk.

"Hello," he said. "Yes."

"Send up eleven club sandwiches and thirty-two bottles of light beer," said a voice.

"Very sorry, cafe's closed," replied the clerk. Then, "WHAT did you say?" he shouted angrily.

"Go to hell!" came back. "It's 33!" gasped the clerk. "Those girls! Did you hear it? They SWORE at me!"

They consulted, and finally decided to let it drop.

"But they better cut such talk as that out!" announced the manager. "The idea!"

* * *

In No. 33 all was busy. The blond lady was calmly stripping off her sables. "Say, gimme an old kimona; sumpin' easy, Mig," said she. "I can't jump in my corset. My grief, I came near laughing in that guy's face when we passed him down there."

The big brunette was in the bathroom, removing her velvet gown. "Lemme take a sheet. I'll use it for a wrapper!" she called, gaily. "I couldn't get into your duds, gells. Too small! My, if this ain't a lark!"

The male guests took off their overcoats, displaying workmanlike costumes of trousers and sweaters. Sam, the very smallest, who was the comedy man in his acrobatic act, possessed the gruffest voice, so he it was who used cuss words over the telephone. The overcoats and wraps were hung in a closet, hastily emptied of its store of rustling skirts, the property of Birdie and Mignon. The biggest man then took charge. His name was Willie, and he was a Broadway rounder, so you know he wouldn't shy at much short of manslaughter. The rest were equally indifferent as to what became of them.

"You two," he said to Birdie and Mignon, "pack your clothes. Did you get the trunks down like I told you?"

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The trunks were there, stacked up in a row along by the piano. "Now, you just pack, see?" he went on. "We'll do the rough house business."

"Oh, Willie," cried Mignon, fearfully. "P'praps we better not do it! Oh, just s'posing he'd have us all pinched!"

"Hully gee, Mig, don't get cold feet," said Charlie, the largest acrobat. "Ain't we got it all fixed at the station house? This guy's got a fine chance if he does make a beef. Now, fellers, commence!"

The party began. The biggest blonde suddenly smote the largest man, who was a comedian, and used to knocks, right in the solar plexus. They clinched, and went crashing to the floor amid screams and yells from the audience. The big brunette, still screeching, flew to the piano. As she started to take a seat upon the piano stool, one waggish soul pulled it away. She hit the floor with a thud which was of the dull, sickening variety.

"Hoop, la!" she shouted, merrily, and hurled herself into the struggling mass on the sitting room floor, for everybody was mixing up in the burlesque scrap.

"Gee, what a scene for an afterpiece!" gasped the big blonde, as she rolled out from under the couch, on top of which the smallest acrobat was doing head stands. Somebody grabbed her arm, and in a second she was joyously pummeling Willie. She was Willie's wife, so probably she handed him a wallop or two that was on the level.

"Time!" he called, but she basely punched him, anyway, in a very unsportsmanlike way.

"Darn it, Aggie!" he expostulated. "This is a kid! Don't soak me like that again!"

Every one sat on the floor and waited, with their ears close to the ground. Footsteps sounded outside in the main hall, where agitated tenants were massing, angrily demanding that the row next door cease at once, if not sooner.

"It's all right, they're going to complain! At it again, folks!" Whispered Willie. Jimmy and Harold, who were songwriters and a pair of regular clips, sat down

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at the piano. They consulted a brief instant only, then, each playing a different tune, they burst into a wild bedlam of sound.

"Pack, gells, pack!" urged the big blonde as she grabbed the end of a trunk, signalling to Willie, who grinned delightedly.

Smash! went the trunk, as they lifted, then dropped it. It made a lovely noise.

"But my old man!" shrieked the whole crowd, madly, finishing a chorus, as the artists at the tortured piano ceased for breath.

"In dear old Gawgah, mah Southern ho-ooome," wailed Harold, through his nose, the next minute, with Jimmy playing the accompaniment in ragtime, while the big brunette performed independently upon four keys at the O. P. side.

"Hey, gimme a little cold turkey, Harold!" It was Johnny Cook, the buck dancer, who had been busily employed by Birdie in rolling and tying all the rugs but one, upon which he now slid about on the polished floor, doing an imitation of Washington crossing the Delaware. Rap! Rap! "Open this door!" commanded some one outside, and the 'phone's ringing showed that there would soon be plenty doing.

"Dear Old Georgia" gave way to "Turkey in the Straw." And young Mr. Cook began dancing a thunderous buck, with all those not at the suffering piano clapping and yelling.

"I'll break it in!"

"G'wan and open the door, Willie!" ordered Willie's wife, draping her sheet anew over her noble figure. Willie bravely did her bidding. The manager, red-faced and very haughty, tried to push past Willie's ponderous bulk.

"Stop this outrageous conduct THIS MINUTE!" he choked out. A dozen interested tenants, some grinning, others angry, endeavored to squeeze close enough to get a look at the doings inside No. 33.

"We'll quit when we want to, see, Clarence?" stated Willie, rudely.

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"Give 'im a punch in the lamp, Bill!" came from within.

"You'll stop it NOW! It's 3 o'clock, and I won't have it! This ain't the Bowery! Where are the persons who rent this apartment? I demand to see them!"

"Put those hussies out, Mr. Goodplayer! I won't live here another day if you don't!" said an irate female.

Birdie, dauntless girl, sped down the hall to the door. "Hussy, am I?" she trilled. "I know who's talking! It's that dame with the rhinestone joolry who tried to butt in and get in our set, and got a throw-down! Hussy, yourself!"

"Oh, Heavens, this is unspeakable!" stormed the lady addressed, shrinking into her own hall. A mean male tenant snickered. (He was a bachelor.) "They're two swell looking gals, you bet," he said, approvingly, to his sleepy-eyed valet, who had roused him to view the fun. "I'm for them."

"Don't you dare encourage this gang of hoodlums, sir!" yelled the manager.

"Come on in! Don't you care!" giggled Birdie, daringly, and amidst a chorus of, "Oh, how shameful," from the better element, the supporter of beauty, graciously bowed in by Willie, joined 33 unblushingly.

"My name's John Sinclair!" he announced, when led into 33's sitting-room. "I'm delighted. Say, what ARE you people up to?"

When he heard the plan, he advised still more noise. It was no time for ceremony, and when they had fitted Mr. Sinclair out with a drink he was like an old and cherished friend.

"Let me send Muggins for a moving van, eh?" he suggested. "We can get 'em here by 5 o'clock. Gosh! If he puts you out, you have to go, and don't give him any time to repent." The disturbed manager had uttered a final threat before departing. But he was lurking about, near at hand, that was certain. Muggins, the valet, was called, and dispatched for a van.

All hands, appealed to by Mignon, who had the pack-

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ing nearly finished, took twenty minutes to stuff odd things into chiffonier drawers, fill suit cases, do up bundles of pictures, and tie mattresses in sheets, roping them securely. Make-up boxes, powder rags, fronts and switches of brunette and blond hues, were bundled into waste paper baskets.

"Oh, don't, I'll fix 'em!" pleaded Mignon in girlish embarrassment, as the prop hair was waved aloft by Harold, who had hit the cheering rye bottle many times, and was ever so cheerful in consequence.

"Great Scott, ain't we all in the show business?" inquired Charlie. "What's the odds?"

The furniture was placed conveniently for a quick getaway when the van men should come.

"Now, up and at it!" said Willie, breathless from toting a big theatre trunk into the narrow hall. "He hasn't said get out yet, so we'll make him do it." Harold and Jimmy held down the piano; Mignon sat beside the lively Mr. Sinclair on a rolled up mattress.

Young Mr. Cook made ready for another spirited buck dance. The big blonde and the big brunette were there when it came to dancing. Before both had become burlesque queens they had played the varieties from Harry Morosco's to Tony Pastor's as a singing and dancing sister act. They carried a little overweight now, but they could still hit it up at a lively gait.

The music started; so did the dancing. The rest stamped and clapped and yelled. Birdie, excited, caught up her skirts and joined the heavyweights, but Mignon, who could spot an angel every time, made goo-goos at Mr. Sinclair. Even in such a short time she had him going, and he had fondly inquired why a clever girl like she wasn't out doing the Camille Clifford. It looked as if he'd be digging up for a musical comedy before long, because Mignon had an awfully winning way with her.

Even above the din they heard the enemy knocking on the outside door. Birdie, backed by Willie and Charlie, the huskiest acrobat, opened it fearlessly. The proprietor and the manager were there.

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"Well?" remarked Birdie. The uproar inside kept on.

The proprietor made a long speech. He said they had to leave his house, and leave it mighty quick. They had broken the lease, and he wouldn't have such a band of rowdies in his respectable hotel.

Birdie was just as sassy as he was. She asked what about his shine meals and thieving servants, his cock-roaches and ants, and the overcharges on the bills.

"You get out—leave! That's all I got to say!" he said, scowling. "You ain't respectable."

"You're a liar!" cried Birdie. "You, and your chorus gell, who you go to supper with, and you married!" she added.

It became a personal war. Each said biting things, and Birdie, had she not been restrained by the prudent Willie, would have slapped the enemy's countenance.

She was really mad, and when she rejoined the circle of friendly Indians, she swore she'd get even. Just then the van man arrived, led by the intrepid Muggins, who had got him up out of bed. Four large men were along. They seized upon the furniture, hustled it out, their heavy boots clattering upon the tiled floors of the main halls like a charge of circus elephants.

Those within were laughing—all but Birdie. A hectic flush burned in her fair cheeks, and it was real, too. She cast an infuriated eye about their erstwhile happy home. It fell upon the two long mirrors, set in the wall, for this was an apartment fitted with all manner of charming devices. A hammer lay on the piano, and she grasped it.

"I'll fix his flat!" she screeched, and with one swoop she broke that glass into quivering bits, which fell in a shower about her feet. The proprietor, watching the departure of his tenants' property, gleefully rubbed his hands.

"They're breaking their stuff and licking each other, and I hope they all choke," he said, happily. The smashing went on, and he joyed still more. Birdie had demolished the second glass, and her friends, catching her festive spirit, snatched anything they found, and as Slats

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observed, they "put it on the fritzerine for fair."

As a parting jest, Charlie, Slats and Sam did some funny falls.

The ceiling was too low to permit all three to mount on each other's shoulders and stand erect, so Slats, the top-mounter in the act, bent over, standing on Sam, who was astride of Charlie, the strong man.

"Go!" called Charlie, and go they did, taking the art nouveau chandelier with them in the descent.

As the trio bowed to the delighted onlookers, the van men took out the last piece of baggage. The ladies hurried into their handsome garments, the gentlemen washed their soiled hands, and all were done.

Mr. Sinclair was still in full dress. "Where do you go from here?" he asked.

"Don't book that far ahead," remarked Harold, brilliantly. But Mignon named the hotel. Birdie had hastily powdered her fevered cheeks and shiny nose, and assumed her furs and wraps. Mr. Sinclair was a sport. "If you'll stand for these duds," he began, entreatingly, "let's all go down to Mack's for breakfast. Will you? Come on, do."

"Will I get autos, or cabs, sir?" asked Muggins, deferentially.

"Get a bunch of both, Mug," returned his employer, gallantly offering his arm to the lovely and coonful Mignon. Heads up and manner haughty, the party left the hotel.

The day clerk had just come on watch, and heard the scandal. He watched them enviously as they waited outside in the chill Winter air for the cabs and autos. "That's the life, you bet," he sighed.

The Manager's New Wife.

THE LANDLADY (dropping into a chair)—I'm wore out; I ain't hadda chanct tuh grab a cuppa cawfee since brekfus. Been puttin' up noo curtains in the second floor front 'cause the manager of the "Beautiful Bowery Blondes" is here on his weddin' trip. He says tuh me, "Mis' De Shine," he says, "I didn't know whether tuh go tuh the Waldof, or come here, but yer cookin's grand, so here we are." Sam's a fine fella. I dunno's I approve of him marryin' outa the business, but she's goodlookin'.

THE SOUBRETTE—Dyuh think so? She's laced sumpin' fierce. I see 'em comin' in yestiddy, I wunner ef Sam give her them stones. I guess he's got the price, seein' salaries he pays.

MISS IVA LINE (in the chorus)—Them gells has tuh live on almost nothin', an' he won't let nobuddy in back. I dunno how he expects a lady tuh live ef no one's allowed tuh mix in an' ast 'em out tuh grub.

THE BURLESQUE QUEEN (celebrated as one of the 700 "best gowned and most beautiful" burlesque queens in the business)—My dear, he's perfectly right. Looka me, I've rose, an' I kin thank the same manager I got now fur shieldin' me from temptation when I fust went on the stage. Johnnies is better kep' off.

THE PROPERTY MAN—They're all fourflushin', anyway. Got good clothes and thirty cents.

MISS IVA LINE (tossing her head haughtily)—Well, they was a party follered us fur eleving jumps last season, an' he sent me a pieca joolry every performance. I don't call that bein' a dub.

THE MANAGER'S NEW WIFE.

THE SOUBRETTE (oh, these kindhearted girlies!)
—What'd yuh do with 'em, Clara? I ain't seen yuh wear none of it.

THE LANDLADY—Susy, if Coppit & Blow, them acrobats on the top floor back, starts tuh set down, tell 'em I said they gotta settle or nothin' doin'. Them guys been stallin' me, sayin' they're restin', an' here I've found they're doin' six shows a day at the Sans Souci. Kin yuh beat a deceitful acrobat? An' me treatin' them boys like I was their maw. It's what I git fur havin' a heart; I can't never say no.

THE SLAVEY—Lady at the door says, is Nat M. Wills Stoppin' here? She wants tuh leave a bookay fur him.

THE LANDLADY (bitterly)—No, them Broadway swells is too good tuh stop here. Tell her tuh ast at the Saint Ragis. Well, I knowed him when he was in vodeville. Kin yuh tell me where Spencer Kelly's went?

THE END MAN—Spencer's in vodeville. There's a guy kin sing, too, lemme tell yuh that. Me an' him ust tuh beat the races reg'lar.

THE BLACKFACE COMEDIAN (a little sore because the End Man nailed the job he was after)—Well, Bill, I hope you have luck and last, my boy. I was with 'em last season, but I was too big a hit, an' that's why I'm playin' dates. I never got no less'n seven encores an' nachally the star puts up a holler. I don't blame him.

THE BUCK DANCER—Where are you on the bill at Moctor's this week? I must come in an' ketch you guys.

THE BLACKFACE COMEDIAN (reluctantly)—Well, we open the show, but it's a piece of spite work. They was afraid ef they give us a decent place we'd kill the topline. Never again fur me, I gotta be featured, or I don't work.

THE SOUBRETTE—I guess he won't be doin'

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nothin' this Winter, then. Gee! here comes Sam an' his noo wife! She's got one them waists like I was tellin' yuh about, Flossie—\$2.98, marked down from four. I shud think he cud git her sumpin' better. Say, her switch don't match; ain't that the offlost lookin' thing yuh ever see? (The boarders all take a look.)

THE LANDLADY (bustling up, ushers the newcomers into their seats)—How d'yuh feel, Mis' Smith? Now, we got corn beef an' cabbitch an' fish. But I kin give yuh a pieca steak. Sam allus likes steak—there, I've done it! Yunno I've knowed Sam so long I'm furgettin' an' callin' him by his fust name—Susy, she'll have a pieca steak.

THE BURLESQUE QUEEN—I s'pose yuh'll go on the road with the show, Mis' Smith? It'll be noo fur yuh.

THE SOUBRETTE—I s'pose she ain't never even been behind!

SAM'S WIFE (with perfect self-possession)—Well, I don't know. It keeps me busy watchin' my own shows—yunno I got two burlesques out that my fust husband left me—an' I dunno's I kin go with him. Please pass the bread.

THE PROPERTY MAN—Them dames had her down fur a mark. I guess that'll hold 'em fur a while.

THE BURLESQUE QUEEN—Oh! Rully!

MISS IVA LINE—I knowed HE wudn't marry no one without a bankroll. I'll bettcha she's fifty, too, D'yuh think them rings is real? I don't.

THE LANDLADY—Susy, go gitta clean plate. My Gawd! yuh stand there like a lobster. Sam, try some these pitattas.

THE END MAN—Say, fine fur Sam. She's a bird, ain't she? Bet she's a good fella. Got nice eyes.

THE BLACKFACE COMEDIAN—I don't want no marryin' in mine. My wife run off with a bum circus

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bandman, an' I'm glad of it. Not fur me. I don't like that skirt's face.

THE BUCK DANCER—They got a private bath. She makes Sam git his nails manicured. Like tuh see any fairy boss me.

HIS WIFE (from outside)—Jack! C'mere this minnit an' carry up my soot case! Told you not to dare tuh g'win tuh dinner till I got back from rehearsal! (The Buck Dancer departs hastily, and is heard apologizing meekly; then door closes.)

THE PROPERTY MAN—Haw! Haw! He'll ketch it. She's got a punch that's all the goods, too. Bet she wallops him.

THE LANDLADY—All yuh folks what's through, vamoose—see? Set still, Sam, an' finish y'r supper, an' yuh have some more puddin', Billy. (All exit, grumbling, except the Manager, His Wife and the End Man.)

THE END MAN—You shut 'em up, all right, Effie. I had to laugh. I let on I'd never seen you.

THE MANAGER—Say, Maggie, send across the street, and I'll buy a nice cold quart for us four. They think you're really in the business, Effie.

HIS WIFE—Well, I guess I can hand that bunch as good as they send. I heard every word they said about me.

THE END MAN—Here's luck, Sam! (Drinks)—Where do you go from here?

Mary Had to Have Her Broadway.

"ARE we there?" anxiously queried Miss Mary Dunwoodie Marshall, and the Pullman conductor replied that they were. "Pretty dark," he observed, cheerfully, as he proffered a helping hand, while the porter, awaiting his tip, stood with her suit case ready.

"But is this really Marshalltown? Are you sure?" she asked, looking up at the conductor uncertainly from the darkness, lit only by a lantern swung by a brakeman down by the baggage car, from whence came the sound of a trunk hitting the rickety platform with a loud thump. "Why, there are no lights!"

"Here she is, mother; here's Mary!" shrieked a voice before the polite official could answer, and a pair of boyish arms embraced Miss Marshall, while from all sides came big and little relatives, some bearing lanterns and all clamoring a welcome. The engine gave a preliminary toot-toot, then it puffed away gallantly, and the train, gathering speed as it went, disappeared into the night.

She was at home again after ten years in the cold North, battling for a living like the other "business women" who toil shoulder to shoulder with the men. Back to peace once more, where Southern breezes blew softly and winter never came. She kissed her sisters, her mother and all the little cousins rapturously.

"Oh, isn't it lovely to be back!" she wept, foolishly, into the tallest cousin's breast pocket, and he patted her heaving shoulders awkwardly, while the rest clustered about, urging her to cease. Then Miss Marshall kissed them all around again, while the biggest cousin told a black man

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to bring down the trunk on a wheelbarrow and to hurry about it.

"It's only a flag station now, honey," said her mother, as a small cousin lit their way down the sun-hardened clay road, with all the rest crowding close to the traveller from New York, hanging upon her lightest word, "things ah very different than when yoh papah was livin', May. I wrote yo' but it'll be a shock. Marshalltown's just going to rack and ruin, with the Carys and the Blackburns and the Stephen Johnstones moved to Mobile and the young folks marryin' and moving."

"And Courtney Hamilton's married tuh Flora Thomas an' gone tuh Chicago on the weddin' trip," put in Alice, the youngest and prettiest sister.

"Has she?" said Miss Marshall. She wasn't much interested, although she tried hard to be. Flora Thomas, in days gone by, had been her dearest friend. Suddenly, forgetting to watch where she stepped, she tripped over a log and fell. They had her up at once, but the ripping noise which heralded the fact that her best silk petticoat had parted from a section of flounce caused Miss Marshall to feel a sudden unreasonable anger against Mississippi roads that couldn't have pavements and electric lights. The cousins were laughing. The biggest one remarked gaily that in a week she'd know every snag in the road and be able to find her way in the dark.

"But why on earth don't the street cleaners take 'em away?" demanded Miss Marshall, at which her sister giggled and reminded her that there were no such persons. "We all know where the bad places are," she explained.

"Oh!" said Miss Marshall, vaguely, inwardly deciding that much walking along such a thoroughfare would ruin her neat patent leather oxfords. They were at the house at last. A row of Chinese lanterns hung from the roof of the wide veranda to welcome the guest. Old black Mammy Lou was on the steps, and the twins, her sons, grown into two slender yellow-faced striplings, while Miss Marshall remembered them as a couple of rollicking pickaninnies tumbling about in every one's way. "Howdy, Miss

MARY HAD TO HAVE HER BROADWAY.

Ma'y?" they greeted, grinning, while old mammy folded her in a warm embrace and whispered that the co'hn pone and ham and the wheaten biscuit and honey were waiting inside. But Miss Marshall had dined in the cafe car but a scant hour before, thinking that dinner would be over, for the hour was late.

"An' yo' all finked ole mammy not gwine feed yo?" reproached mammy. "Shame on yo', chile, yo' mus' fink we all like dem ole Yankees, 'way up No'th!"

"You must eat something, daughter," said her mother, and Mary, seated with the interested relatives eyeing her smart brown gown and the diamond ring which an admirer had presented one Christmas agreed that she must indeed, with such delicacies spread out to tempt her. She had been writing homesick letters for years about these same dishes, comparing the crisp French bread of the hotel where she was cashier with the corn bread of her Southern childhood. Why was it, now that she sat again at the old round mahogany table, which her little fists had pounded in baby days, that she wondered ungratefully just how much she must eat to satisfy them. And why did a vision of lighted Broadway, with its crowds, flit across her mind, blotting out for a brief instant the reality of a lamp-lit, low-ceilinged room, filled with the loved ones for whom she had longed for years?

She was tired. That was it. Worn out by the long, dusty trip and the noise of the train. It was quiet here, with only the sound of insects busy with their nightly interchange of buzzings and chirpings, to break the stillness. A dog barked in the distance and their watchdog answered from his place under the veranda. A colored girl, another pickaninny grown to womanhood, waited upon the table noiselessly.

"Lively? Oh, yes, indeed," she answered, realizing that her sister awaited an answer. "What do I do in New York? Oh, I go to work at 8 and stop at 5. Once a week I go to a show with, with—a friend." She had hesitated for a second, then left out the friend's name.

"Another young woman, I suppose," said her mother

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understandingly. "Of course you can't go out with a gentleman without a chaperon."

Without a chaperon, she who had lived ten years in a Broadway hotel! And she was 30 years old. Miss Marshall felt a desire to laugh, but she restrained it, nor did she correct the older lady's mistake. "And the social life, dear," pursued her mother, complacently buttering a biscuit, which she spread with jam and bestowed upon the very smallest girl cousin, who immediately tried to swallow it whole, much to the pleasure of the other youngsters. "I presume you've met, living in such a smart hotel, many of the best people?" Ye gods! Miss Marshall thought of the bookmakers, the actresses and actors, all the "wise" people who paid their bills, cashed their checks and put in I O U's "until to-morrow" at the cashier's window where she officiated. She told them that there wasn't much time to go about, consequently her acquaintances were few, at which her mother expressed approval. "All the better, my dear," said she. "Of course, we read the papers you send—I've kept them all, just fancy—and know that young women are much advanced, but it's far better for you to visit at only a few select homes. Far better."

Miss Marshall murmured something polite. It wouldn't do to tell them that the only "home" she visited was the flat of Jessie Fisher, soubrette in a musical comedy, where she and Jessie cooked things, and afterward a few jolly persons dropped in, played the piano and had a drink or two. It would sound really criminal to narrate such actions in this respectable society. Her sister wanted to know all about the hotel, how big was her room or did she have two? No doubt Mary had a private bath and electric light and other wonders. One of the Jones boys had been to Pittsburg and he had returned with wild tales of the splendor which one found in the big hotels. Young Miss Alice sighed to think that her sister enjoyed such privileges. Miss Marshall forbore to shatter the illusion regarding the comforts of her New York home. The picture of her tiny dark room, with a view of a narrow

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airshaft, and cold but not hot water, the designer having neglected such conveniences when planning the employes' quarters, was not alluring. One froze in it in the winter and sweated wretchedly in summer, making long pilgrimages to the bath at the other end of a corridor. For those fortunate guests who were able to afford it the hotel offered most luxurious rooms, but Miss Marshall took her ten a week, with her board and room, and was glad to get it.

She asked about all her girlhood friends. Many were matrons now, with a wee brood to watch over; others were dead. Her own family seemed vastly changed. The "soft Southern voices" she had longed to hear sounded high pitched and shrill, and they chattered incessantly, laughing uproariously at home-made jests at which she forced herself to smile, knowing it was expected. Village humor, to a young woman who had seen all the current comedies in New York, seemed flat. In the hotel were stagefolk and managers who often had a couple of passes for the tired-looking little cashier, the one who wanted to go "back home" so badly. Miss Marshall had yearned for the old place, set among the towering holly trees, from which the long gray southern moss hung like the beards of very old men. Her fellow workers had known all about how "Marshie" was skimping and saving to manage it. They all agreed that she ought to go, too, for she was "a lady," as the manager himself had emphatically informed the bookmaker's clerk who had tried to introduce himself and received a good snubbing. The head cashier laughingly said that Marshie, with her Southern drawl, needed the background of a vine clad, quiet cottage, with some cats about, and at least two dozen white muslin dresses, with a lot of ribbons, which she should wear always. Her pale face did not look well above the stiff collars which she wore, and the severe white shirt-waists. It was the star of a Broadway show who took Marshie under her pretty wing and proceeded to edit her wardrobe. First the "front" of dun colored hair, which dropped in a dismal line about her face, was fluffed be-

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comingly and fastened carefully at a more rakish angle, partly covered by the scanty locks which were Marshie's very own. The result was more than the star had hoped for, and with the very faintest touch of rouge, which the victim at first positively refused to permit, capitulating when she had noted the improved effect, Marshie looked quite smart. The star had a dressmaker who charged frightfully, but oddly enough madame made up a plain but well fitting blue gown of a warm shade, and with it a modish coat at the most absurd price. Marshie, who knew only vaguely about such matters, having purchased her garments during her few leisure hours at somebody's closing-out sale, had no suspicion that madame would later put down a good sum to the star's account. Madame herself disapproved, asking how, when Marshie wanted more clothes, it would be managed, but the star said that first of all her protegee must get "the idea," after which she could exercise care and get cheaper things elsewhere. And this Miss Marshall had done, investing moderately in pretty things as she went along. Five of her ten a week went home, leaving her but a small capital. However, the head clerk had a "system," at which he won much money, and, as in most Broadway establishments, the hotel's staff read "the dope" daily and took a flyer, one and all, when some guest in the know tipped them that a particularly good one was going through. Miss Marshall, presented with \$30 one day by the grateful drunkard whose check on the bank where he had no funds she had held at her own risk while he sobered up and connected with his friends, was most embarrassed and curtly refused it. But he explained that he had made a little bet for her, being flush, and the money represented her winnings. The head clerk, when consulted, bade her keep it. After that the sheet writer who stayed up all night and consequently met her coming down as he was going up, reminded by her, he said, sheepishly, of his sisters down in Tennessee, gave her a tip now and then, and she cautiously wagered \$2 each time.

Nearly always the horse won, and little by little the

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hoard for the trip to Mississippi grew larger. The newspaper editor, interested in the little woman's history, got her transportation when she at last happily announced that she could go. She would get no salary during her absence, for "the boss" believed in paying only for what he received, but the forty which she would have earned lay with a hundred more, to be expended just in having the very loveliest time one could fancy. A certain quiet young man, who regularly called for Marshie on each Tuesday night, taking her to dinner and a show and returning her promptly at 11:15, appeared in the afternoon for the first time.

He carried the suit case, the jacket and the box of fruit and sandwiches which the head waiter had personally superintended, under orders from the head clerk, and Marshie, gowned in her tailor-made suit and polo hat, her hair fluffed out and her cheeks a delicate pink, said her farewells and trotted out to the car with her young man. It had been a good trip, with home at the end of it, and she had given herself up to a full month of bliss.

Then why wasn't she blissful? she demanded angrily of herself, as they sat on the wide porch later with Harry Marion, her first beau, playing the guitar he had brought as he lounged next her on the wide settee. He had not married, he said with a laugh, and he glanced at her meaningly. Miss Marshall felt no coy desire to blush as he, with evident intention, suddenly let his hand lie near hers, still strumming idly with the other.

Instead, it occurred to her that his hair was very curly, and she hated curly haired men. And his collar didn't fit. She had an intense desire to grasp it firmly and pull it around some way to show him the way the thing should be. And he wore an odious "made" tie of a light spotted pattern much in vogue in country districts.

It was clear that he had garbed himself for the occasion, for his light trousers, blue coat and a somewhat profuse display of jewelry said as much. He was, no doubt, nice and clean and altogether pleasing, but he bored Miss

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Marshall. He insisted on being clever and making epigrams, and they were not original.

All these years she had thought of Harry and had written him, hoping against hope that he wouldn't quite forget.

He was assuring her now, as the others discussed some excursion shortly to be made for her entertainment, that he hadn't forgotten, not once. It was horrible. Why did they all crowd away, leaving her there with him? She got up and went over to her mother. "Is it all right; he's waited, my dear," the latter said in a low tone.

"I don't know what you mean," answered the returned wanderer formally, and her mother sighed heavily. What did the girl want? She wondered to herself. Here was the finest young man in Marshalltown.

Her daughter expressed a desire to go to bed and she gave poor Harry a chilly hand as he murmured, "Adios, dear Mary, I shall see you early to-morrow." Early to-morrow! Good gracious, did he have no occupation that he could gad about day and night? She had purposed messing about in the kitchen in a kimono and he must needs make a proper toilette necessary.

She kissed them all round. "Don't you feel well?" inquired her mother, anxiously.

"Oh, indeed I do; splendid!" she answered, ashamed of the strangeness she felt. She couldn't sleep up in the room in which her baby cradle had been rocked. The same bed, the funny old French one with the two steps by which one mounted cautiously to sink into the feathers. Feathers! Miss Marshall had lain upon a hard modern mattress, pillowless, because the Sunday page in her favorite paper advised it, too long. The feathers seemed to choke her, even though they were covered with sheets scented with orris. One couldn't breathe well.

The moon's rays made a path to where she lay. Not a sound broke the still night except the soft swish of the curtains, stirred by the October breeze. It was maddening. Oh, for the roar of the elevated, the rattle of surface cars, the shouts of "Keb! keb!" the newsboys crying their late extras and all the riot of night along Broadway.

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She tried to be reasonable. How could it be that on the first night at home she was lonesome for the New York which she had sworn she hated. But nothing was the same. Perhaps morning would tell a different tale.

* * *

She awoke at 7:30, in obedience to the habit of years of early rising. The house was silent. Even the watchdog slept peacefully when she had dressed and descended the stairs and looked out upon the world. She grew hungry and went back to the kitchen, but here again was only silence. Then she remembered. Breakfast was at 11, as of yore, and servants, as well as their betters, still slept.

She had changed; that was all. Everything else remained the same, while all her ways, fixed as they were now, belonged to a different life. The clay road which led to the depot stretched in a yellow line through wide-branched magnolias and tall, straight cottonwoods. Stunted half-tropic palms grew underneath. A pig, pursued by another, ran squealing from the side of the house, frightening the solitary spectator by its sudden appearance.

A couple of goats bleated noisily over by the "spring-house," in which the big pans of milk and the crocks of sweet butter cooled.

It was just as she had pictured it, Miss Marshall thought, despairingly, a big, comfortable, care-free life, and yet she could have run after a Broadway car, dodging motor cars and vehicles, obliged to stand for blocks after she was aboard, and shouted for pure joy of being there.

"Ma'y," said a voice. Startled, she looked around. There was her swain of the night before astride of a black horse.

"How do you do?" she remarked, ungraciously, at which he dismounted, dropped the bridle over his steed's head and came up the steps, announcing that he had come to breakfast. "Lazy!" he repeated in surprise, as she inquired if this was his usual breakfast hour; "Ah'm up a half houah earliah than usual, faih lady, because of yo'."

"Well, then, I think you lead a pretty worthless life!"

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exclaimed Miss Marshall, emphatically. "Why, men up North are in their offices by 9 and earlier, and you simply sleep away the day. I could never stand it, never!"

"Why, May Dunwoodie Marshall!" His tones expressed a pained astonishment. "Ah'm a gentleman, not a—a common person!" He had paused, lacking a word.

"Well, I'm a working person!" with which she left him abruptly; nor did she halt until she had parted the dining room curtains, breathing hard from anger at this easy-going son of the South and hoping with all her heart he'd go away. But when the household was stirring and breakfast was ready he was on hand, hurt, but intent upon ascertaining just what he had done to offend this energetic young woman. And Miss Marshall could not have told him what it was she felt, had she wished.

* * *

"Daughter, come out heah!" called the mother. The family were gathered in the sitting room, bright with the glow of two big lamps. Miss Marshall sat alone in the half gloom of the dining room.

"Please let me stay here and think," she pleaded when her mother had come in person to fetch her out.

"Ma'y," said her mother firmly, "yo' all come out! It's not healthy tuh be stayin' by yo'self like yo' do. Harry's here. I want yo' tuh mind me."

"Very well, mama," she returned, "I'll come."

* * *

The moon rode high in the dark blue skies as Miss Marshall peeped out of the front door. It was 3 of a starlit morning and she had business of supreme importance on the highway. The watchdog awoke at the very time he should have slept, as usual, growled, but, noting the friendly hand she put out, he whined, snuffed at her once, then, satisfied with his deductions, resumed his slumbers under the veranda.

She sped swiftly down the road, jumping nervously at the swaying shadows cast by the hanging moss on the holly tree branches on either side. It was half a mile to

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the little postoffice, but she made it in record time, popped a letter into the slit and flew homeward, her heart pumping painfully from fear that some one had seen.

But Marshalltown slept, as it did some eighteen hours of the twenty-four. That night she slept soundly and dreamlessly, and Vinie, the black maid, had to shake her several times to get her up by noon.

* * *

"A telegram!" there was consternation in her younger sister's childish tones, "for you, Ma'y!" Miss Marshall, feeling like a robber, or, at least, a most shocking, ungrateful individual, took it. "I must go back," she heard herself declare; "there's an unexpected fall rush and they need me." There were protests from all, but none moved her. Her mother wept that she should return with but ten days of her vacation spent. The sisters wished frankly that they might go.

And Miss Marshall went back, kissing all the relatives and smiling pleasantly, now that it couldn't matter, at Harry Marion, who held aloof and looked on coldly as the rest shouted Godspeed to her. The quiet young man, warned by a wire from Pittsburg, was at Hoboken to meet her. It was the first time Miss Marshall had ever kissed him, and now she gave a shriek of happiness and flung herself into his arms. It was unexpected, but he was game and he kissed her back with all the fervor that even the Southern suitor might have displayed.

"So you couldn't stand it—eh, Marshie?" laughed the head clerk when she came in; "did I make the telegram strong enough? I did my best."

"You're an angel, Jack," said Miss Marshall.

That night she sat at the window that fronted on the airshaft, which opened on Broadway, sniffing the welcome fragrance of gasoline autos, the noise and rattle and roar of Broadway on a Saturday night, drinking it thirstily.

This was life, and she was satisfied.

Flatnose Ed Takes His Medicine.

It was 10 o'clock, too early for all the "push" to be found in Murphy's place in Mott street. Many customers had Murphy, and a few of them had any desire to be about when an inquisitive "elbow" from Headquarters came poking around, asking Murphy for this one or that one.

Once in a while a few sightseers floated in to have a look at how the other half lives, and it made the crooks laugh to think of how the marks would go home thinking they'd found out. For a stranger had only to show his face, and all the gang sat orderly and quiet, drinking their modest beers, until he left, when things grew lively again. The crook shuns publicity, and wishes no spectators when taking his pleasures.

The piano player, in a loose blue shirt, with a soiled handkerchief around his neck, and baggy trousers, sat idle, reading the dope for to-morrow's races. He hadn't picked a winner in a week, he complained to "Fats," the lazy old negro, who sold cooked crabs and sandwiches from a greasy basket. Murphy's guests must eat.

Near the piano sat Flatnose Ed, who was just out of "college," and here he was, drunk as a fool, telling all who came near him how last night he and his pal, Shorty Casey, had caught a guy near the Bridge. They had trimmed him to a fare-you-well, boasted Flatnose, and old Einstein, the fence had given up fifty for the guy's pin, which showed how good it was, for any one knows how close he is about coin.

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"Aw, shut up, an' rest y'r gab," growled Murphy, himself, looking in. "Whyn't yu'h gwan an' sleep it off? I've told yuh twict them bulls is round lookin' fur bot' uv youse, an' yet yuh stay here tellin' all yuh know."

"Play sumpin' there, Clarence!" roared Flatnose, ignoring the anxious Murphy. "Wot yez here fur, ef not tuh amoose a gent?"

"What'll I play, pretty?" inquired the pianist, gayly, winking at Minnie Dorrity, the "dip," who was having a whisky with her friend Gold Tooth Bessie.

Flatnose inclined toward a sentimental ballad, so the pianist gave him "Good-by, Sweet Marie," which he played with such feeling that Flatnose sobbed bitterly, after he heard the words, sung rather tunelessly by the two ladies. Flatnose called the long-nosed waiter, who used to be a fighter, and bought all present including "Fats," a drink. Murphy came in again.

"Come on, git under cover, won't yuh, Flatnose?" he urged. "Hully chee, ef I wasn't y'r pal, wud I be pluggin' fur yuh tuh quit blowin' coin in me own joint? They're comin' back, I tell yuh, an' they'll mug yuh, sure. Ain't I right, Bessie?"

"Better screw y'r nut," said the latter. "Gee, yuh just got back. Don't yuh wanta see nawtin', 'stead uv takin' a chanct fur a pinch comin' off? It'll be life, this time, pal."

"All right, I'll be makin' a hotfoot fur home, then," said Flatnose, evidently realizing the need of disappearing, "an' ef Casey comes in, tell him I'h home sleepin'."

"Now y'r talkin' sense," said Murphy, approvingly; "y'r too good a fella tuh git th' woist uv it—take the back door, troo the alley." Flatnose rose, steadying himself by holding an edge of the table and making his adieus in some haste, he lumbered across the room and vanished through the rear entrance.

It was light out on the Bowery, and under the elevated structure a bareheaded Italian woman, with

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a flock of little children, was making an uncertain way across the car tracks.

A Third avenue car was coming up through Chatham Square, while another rapidly approached from uptown. Didn't she see the cars? Flatnose paused and, drunk as he was, he knew that if the Dago woman didn't get out of the way in a hurry, the end would be quick. He tried to shout, but his voice could not carry in the noise of a train passing above.

Then she saw the two cars and, petrified by fear, stood still, with hands uplifted in horror.

And from behind him came the voice of the hated "elbow," about whom Murphy had warned him.

"Flatnose, don't move, or I'll shoot!"

He was almost up to Flatnose when he, too, saw the scene in the street, and being a brave man made up his mind to lose a captive and save a life. And the brain of Flatnose, cleared as in a breath, showing him that here was his chance to escape the law.

But the remnant of manhood, deep down in his thief's soul, bade him leap to the aid of helpless creatures in distress, and, forgetting self, he obeyed.

"I'll croak like a sport," he thought.

Flatnose hurled the woman out of harm's way, landing her in a tumbled heap in the mud. Grasping the scanty skirts of two brown and screeching mites, he flung them after the mother; then, snatching up a third, jumped for his life, and landed, but not before the wheels, in spite of the motorman's frantic efforts, had crunched sickeningly over his right foot.

It had taken, perhaps 20 seconds, and when the detective, who had dashed out, caught and borne the remaining two children safely to the other side of the Bowery, got through the crowd to the side of Flatnose, the latter lay limp, the leg mangled, an easy capture.

* * * * *

And did the detective, thrilled by Flatnose's hero-

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ism, shield the crook and let him go, bidding him go forth and be a better man? No, for they only do those things in books. You see, Flatnose and his pal had killed the mark near the Bridge, and it was murder he was wanted for. So, after he came out of the hospital, he limped into court on a crutch, and, with Casey, also a prisoner, took his life sentence, and a few kind words from the judge.

Nor did the Dago woman work for his pardon. She didn't even know who had saved her prattling brood.

So that was the finish of Flatnose.

The Comedian's Wives.

THE PROPERTY MAN—I see where a dame was brung before the judge fur refusin' to answer questions. Them courts is bad things to monkey with.

THE INGENUE—Well, I dunno why a gell must git out in front of a hull gang of rude men an' tell her past. I wudn't.

FLORA FLITTER (playing the part of Lady Slasher in "Harum-Scarum," the musical comedy)—Why, I was up in supplementary proceedin's onct. I just give 'em the laff, an' didn't the other party's lawyer take me to dinner, an' he's a good frena mine tuh this day.

GERTIE VODDYVIL (of Voddyvil & Haines, refined comedy duo)—I'd certainly like to know what the fella settled for. Some says ten thousand an' some eighty.

THE SOUBRETTE (thoughtfully)—I wouldn't a give up them letters fur less'n eighty. But I guess he fell hard all right.

THE LANDLADY—Them men writes us gells letters, an' then tries tuh renig, an' I'm just tickled tuh death when they git it, an' git it good.

THE MAGICIAN—A feller's a mark to write 'em. I never write nothin'. Ef I got anything to say I tell the party. That's me.

THE PROPERTY MAN—If a guy's careful he kin git along all right any place.

THE SOUBRETTE—A woming's got little enough protection from a deceiving wretch. A little fren' of mine was sued by a party, an' I wisht you'd seen the way Effie framed up to go to court. She borried

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a old dress from the wardrobe woman in her show, an' put her joolry in her stockin', an' made up pale. She made the fella look like a deuce.

THE JUVENILE LEADS (a pretty boy with wavy hair)—Did he have to pay anything?

THE LANDLADY—Well, I should hope not, after bein' humiliated by havin' tuh go there! A party what was a gent'd never ast a lady tuh go in one of them old courts. I'd a been free from that De Shine a long time ago if it wasn't fur the notoriety, an' me so gosh darned sensitive!

THE INGENUE—It ain't no place fur a delikit woman. Listen. I want to ast you sumpin', Mr. Johnson. I bought a bunch of longeray from this fat fella who comes around twict a week sellin' 'em on time payments. Kin he make me settle if I didn't sign nothin'?

THE PROPERTY MAN (a very wise man)—Did you pay him anything yet?

THE INGENUE—Me'n Birdie each give him a two spot, but, honest tuh Gawd, they're perf'ly bum, an' here they'se thirty more tuh pay, an' we ain't worked fur two weeks, an' Birdie with her mawr tuh look out fur! Kin he pinch us?

THE PROPERTY MAN—Soitenly not! Laff in his map!

THE INGENUE—Kin'ly pass the tuhmatta catch-up' an' the bread. I wisht she'd have hot bread. Is thev any pie, Mis' De Shine?

THE LANDLADY—Susy, git her a pieca pie. Well, I see Collins & Bluph is back from Yurup, an' sportin' around, headin' the bill at Moctor's Twenty-third Street, an' here them guys owes me fur three week's board. It's the best yuh git when yer a good fella with them Barnabys.

THE PROPERTY MAN—You bet your life that ain't no lie, Maggie. A team come in to rehearsal Monday mornin' with a prop list a houn' dog couldn't jump over an' I went an' rustled 'em some swell gags

THE COMEDIAN'S WIVES.

fur their act an' digs up a prop lion an' put a new laig on him, an' they lam out Satiddy night an' never give up nothin'.

JOE WOOD (of Wood & Fay)—I can't do them kind of things. We got to have three stage hands help in our act, an' it's five bucks apiece, an' ten to the property man every week. But it saves salary in carryin' people.

THE BURLESQUE COMEDIAN (*sotto voce*)—The big mutt! He never give nobuddy a kind word even! I know him. I put him in the business an' learned him all he knows, an' what does he do? Steals my wife, an' my dancin' finish.

HIS WIFE (in the chorus)—That'll be all! If you're worryin' about him gettin' her, whyn't you come out an' say so? Whyn't you say I ain't your lawful wife now, or sumpin' like that? Ef that woming comes in, I won't set at this table! D'you hear me?

THE BURLESQUE COMEDIAN—Aw, have a little sense! A guy can't open his mouth without you flyin' away up in G!

THE LANDLADY (welcoming a new guest)—Set right down, Daisy. Yer suttently lookin' grand! I s'pose Joe give yuh them stones? They're elegant.

DAISY FAY (of Wood & Fay)—Who, him? I get my own. He never done nothin' fur nobody. Why—hello, Bill!

THE BURLESQUE COMEDIAN (conscious of the glare of his second wife—I—I'm well, thank'y, Daisy. I see yer makin' good with the "Gay Four O'Clocks." Where do you go from here? ..

HIS WIFE (furiously)—How dare you talk to her ef she was onct your wife! Big blond cow!

DAISY FAY (arising, with a plate, ready for action)—Cow, am I? I'll fix you! He never looked at you till I trun him down!

THE LANDLADY—Here, quit! Put down that plate! Ef yuh ladies gotta fight, g'wan out on the

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street! The idee of a rough house comin' off tuh the table!

THE PROPERTY MAN—Bet you dollar the little un wins!

THE MAGICIAN—Took!

THE COMEDIANS WIFE (makes a dive for the yellow pompadour of the enemy)—Goin' to try an' gettim again, are you? Ouch! Lemme at her!

DAISY FAY (landing with the plate)—Help! Police! Assistance! I'm goin' to be kilt!

THE SOUBRETTE—I never see such a disgraceful goin' on. Here, now, git away from me, or I'll land on yuh!

DAISY FAY (goes to the floor after a spirited onslaught by the comedian's wife—I'm dyin'! Help!

THE PROPERTY MAN—Quick! Throw water on her! (He snatches the water pitcher.)

DAISY FAY (suddenly arising)—Yes, you'd ruine my dress, wouldn't you? I'll leave this place this minnit!

THE LANDLADY—Oh, my nerves is just jumpin'! Lawsy!

The Boston Kid's Last Trip.

It was the "Boston Kid's" second winter in Mackenzie Land, and when the wind blew chill through the spruces and firs, with the first feel of snow in the air, he knew that the brief Alaskan summer was ending and that winter and hard times were ahead. The Kid was big and strong and used to roughing it, and when he had pulled the old sweater, worn in bygone days on a Harvard football field, closer about his neck, he shook himself like a healthy young animal and laughed as he watched the gray clouds massing above. Mackenzie Land in winter meant dull days and cold ones, but there were thousands in dust laid away in sacks in a cache which the Kid knew of, which spelled a different life when he hit "the States" again.

The Peel River had a coating of ice to-day, and yesterday its waters had felt fairly warm to the touch as he washed out many panfuls of dirt from the claim which stretched along the bank. It made him feel pleasant to think that the cabin back among the spruce trees was nearly done, and that the pile of logs splint into the proper short lengths for the sheet iron stove had grown daily, even though his partner was down near Pete Ladue's camp (where Dawson City now stands) loading supplies for the long months ahead. The partner was half a Cree, a wanderer from Alberta, who, meeting the Kid after the latter had lost a scanty outfit in a portage up the merciless Yukon, where it swept through Mills Canyon, above Lake Marsh, had staked the Kid to a share of his own belongings, and they had gone on together, past Sixty Mile and Fort Cudahy, disregarding advice, up into the barren wilderness in the search for gold.

THE BOSTON KID'S LAST TRIP.

And they had found it. Below, in Klondike, men fought like dogs, lied and toiled to win out a fortune in districts where mining law forbade more than one claim to one man, but here, a hundred miles of trail from a camp, there was peace, without strife.

The Kid was lonely without Bill, but, being young in hill life, he told himself it was just the idea of winter coming on, where an older miner would have known at once it was but the longing for human society he felt. Somehow he couldn't work to-day, and finally he gave up laboring at the placer and spent his energy at hauling logs with a rope and splitting them into sections. The cabin was as snug as, for instance, the big English entrance hall at his father's place at home, in South Carolina. He told himself mockingly that probably the Governor wouldn't want to change. A woodrat, bushy tailed and pale pink bellied, came and peered at him as he laid the axe down to muse for a few minutes.

The Kid whistled and the rat scampered away, but he returned and played about in the stumpy juniper brush quite fearlessly, gazing at the man in friendly fashion. The Kid stopped chopping again to rest his arms, and addressed the lively rat. "Hello, rat," he remarked, "are you lonesome, too? Don't you wish Bill and the dogs would get back? I do, blamed if I don't. Here! Stay still, I ain't going to hurt you, you fool!! I sort of like to have you round, you little rascal."

The woodrat seemed to know this, and as the Kid cooked his supper of bacon and "bannocks," baked in a frying pan supported by a stick against the fire, the little creature darted about, catching the bits of bacon rind his friend threw toward him. He came in the little "A" tent, where the Kid slept rolled in blankets and tarpaulin, and when its occupant awakened in the freezing dawn he scuttled out again, squeaking.

The Kid figured out the days. It had been three weeks, just about, and Bill was to be back in that time. Perhaps it would be to-day; he hoped so, for snow was falling and the trail would be tough if a storm came up. Soft snow

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made hard traveling, with a dog team to handle and no one ahead to break trail. He began to grow nervous as the snow left a thin covering over everything. It had melted as it fell yesterday, but now it laid on the ground. He took a look at the cabin and proudly surveyed the door which he had made, built of logs split to planklike thickness and nailed together with as few spikes as possible. Nails were precious in those early days in the new gold fields. He fancied Bill would think he hadn't wasted any time.

Suddenly a shot sounded, and his heart gave a great leap. Bill, God bless his old Injun hide, was coming! He rushed down the trail, shouting wildly, quite ignoring the woodrat, which peered out coquettishly at him from under a log.

Yes, it was Bill, and he made up his mind he'd never stay alone again, because it got on a fellow's nerves. "Why, you old son of a gun," he said, affectionately, as the partners met, for the Cree had dropped the reins on the dog team and run forward, "I—I'm glad, pal. I'm glad." He was actually crying, like a big baby, and yet Bill didn't seem to notice it. "Hello, Kid," the other said, and shook the younger man's hand until it hurt. "I'm glad, too. It's been a hell of a lonesome deal alone, ain't it? But see my bunch of dogs. Ain't they all right? And do you know they've packed a thousand pounds of grub in?" "Why, how? The snow ain't begun yet," and the Kid looked wonderingly at the eight dogs, their pink tongues hanging out as they sat, panting from the strain of pulling sledge runners over a half inch of snow.

The Cree laughed. "It's three feet, packed hard, down below," he replied. "We're in a valley here. Have you smoked any fish for the dogs, like I told you?"

"Got a big lot cached," said the Kid. "Say, this one's a peach, ain't he? What's his name?" He indicated a big "husky" dog with bushy tail and thick gray coat. "That's Mogi, and I got him from a chap who was hitting the trail for Dyea," said his partner, unhitching the dogs. "He is a good one. He's lead dog and quick as chain

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lightning, Kid. He'll help pack us out later on, when we move to Circle City. I've got a letter, by the way, for you. Been at Ladue's camp for three months. Guess it's from home."

He handed over the missive, in a woman's unmistakable hand, and the Kid, his face working strangely, tore it open and read. "Fine!" he commented, with a bitter laugh; "I've never been very gassy, have I, Bill? Well, this is from a girl—the girl, old pal—and she says I'm a dead one, too lazy to be a man, and that she's through with me. I was going back, you know, like all the fools. I thought she'd stick to me, but I guess she's right. I wasn't much when she saw me last. Well, let it go at that."

The Cree, a gentleman in instinct, like all his kind, turned away his head, but he heard and sympathized, and when it seemed safe he reached out a hand and held the Kid's fast in a warm grasp of friendship. "You've got me," he said, simply. "Let her go. A gal who won't stick ain't worth hustlin' fur. You're white and I'm red, but my pile goes two ways, one for you. It's better'n nothin', ain't it?"

"You bet it is!" returned the Kid, fervently. "Thank you, Bill. Now come see the cabin. She's about done."

That night winter came in earnest, weighting the spruce branches with snow, and banking it in small drifts as the freezing wind sent it back and forth. The Peel froze hard in a few hours, making it necessary to melt snow for drinking water and ending work on the claim until the next summer, for the gravel banks of the river were solid with frost under the white blanket. "We can move down to a camp on the Stewart or Fort Cudahy, easy, if you feel like bein' with folks," began Bill one day, noticing that the Kid seemed to grow morose as the days wore on. "What say? I'm Injun, and used to bein' alone, but you ain't."

"I'll stay here, where the claim is," said the Kid. "It's just the snow gets me once in a while. I'm satisfied."

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We've got by the scales about \$70,000 in dust now. We'll stay here and take out that much more."

"Good for you," was the answer. "You got grit. You're a lot changed, too, in a year. That girl's wrong, I think."

As it grew colder and the dogs burrowed deep in the snow outside, coming in under the tent used as a shelter for the wood and certain supplies, when feeding time came around, the Kid and Bill became even closer to each other. The Indian, a great specimen of the warlike race of Crees, born in the chill Northland, was kind, generous and just in dealing with the few whom he fancied, showing a warm heart, which he concealed by assuming a fierce coldness toward those whom he disliked, was the older, and the Kid to him was his to watch over and advise. Tall and strong, big boned and fearless was Bill, knowing the pitiless North as others know the mild greenness of a warmer clime, and he took life as it came to him, without complaint, doing the work which Fate laid out to the best of his ability. But he wished at times that "the girl" could see this chap she wouldn't wait for, see him braving cold and hunger, hardship and privation, and taking it without a kick. It wasn't every tenderfoot who butted into a mining country and made good.

And the Kid had swung a pick and climbed bleak summits with the treacherous slide rock smashing down on him as just the mere touch of his body loosened it, bucked ice trails and snowdrifts, and never once had he laid down. It was a good record, and Bill felt it was a pity that the girl couldn't know of it.

That was a pretty rocky letter to write a fellow. It had been sent almost a year before to Skagway, and brought thence by odd persons over the Yukon trail. He liked to think of the speech he would make to this woman, could he see her. He'd ask her how many of the weak kneed chaps she knew back there in that little town, where her folks and the Kid's lived, could stand the gaff up here? He told this to his partner the night they had Mogi, the lead dog, who had waxed fat on dried salmon (for food

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was plenty for man and beast in the camp, owing to Bill's wise forethought) into the cabin to fix up his lame leg.

But the Kid said that it wasn't her fault. He'd been a drunk and a fool, thrown out of college after a rotten failure to pass, and he and the Gove'nor couldn't hit it off, and there it was. He cadged some money from his mother and started for Seattle. Lost it all playing bank there, and shipped before the mast on a sailing vessel to Juneau, and a man had staked him to the outfit which had gone into the rapids. Only he'd hoped to go back again, with something made by his own hard work, and then, perhaps, she'd care to listen.

He bent lower over Mogi's bad foot, and his voice shook a little, but when he looked up there was the old smile which Bill liked to see. But the Kid had begun to look older, somehow.

He was 22 now, and a man, with his careless boy days all behind. Life meant something with a grown-up part to play. Bill and he planned to do a lot of things when the next summer was over. About April they would take a trip down to Circle City, to renew supplies, as a dog train packed in grub from the outside for the miners in the hills, and that meant seeing human beings again. This was one reason for keeping the dogs to drag their sledge across the snow, but it was cheerful having 'em around anyway, and the log cache of fish and smoked moose, added to all summer, held plenty for them all.

One day Bill got a hunch to set a trap just to see if he could catch anything. Caribou drifted past once in a great while, light colored and thin with searching for moss in the drear forests, and sometimes a marten or fox, but fresh meat had been in camp but once. Bill said he wanted some meat instead of eternal bacon, so he arranged a couple of traps, brought in with the winter's grub, and daily visited them, finding it a relief to be doing something. The Kid went along at times, skidding across the crust on his snowshoes and taking short breaths in the freezing air which seemed to penetrate one's very marrow.

One afternoon Bill had just started off, taking all the

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dogs along to give them exercise, and the Kid decided to go into the tent next the cabin, to fill the space under their log bunk with wood for the stove, built by Bill's clever hands. It looked like more snow, so he hurried and got in a lot. Then he took up the axe preparatory to shaving off some kindling in case the fire went out.

There seemed to be something in one moccasin, and, still making kindling, he wiggled his toe and glanced at the foot. The axe, just sharpened, slipped, and down it came on the Kid's right hand, and when he raised it the thumb, sliced off cleanly, lay in a sickening pool of rapidly freezing blood on the floor. He never knew how he reached the cabin, shut the door and fell on the bunk, unconscious from loss of blood and pain.

It was Mogi, galloping ahead, then howling with his long, mournful wolf howl, and running back again, that warned Bill something was wrong. He saw the red stains on the split log flooring, the bloody axe and the Kid lying limp and helpless, and a dreadful fear hit into his soul that his partner was dead. Then he saw the hand and understood.

In quick time he had the member dressed as well as his small knowledge could suggest, then, rubbing snow into the Kid's face, he called to him frantically to speak. Dimly the latter heard and opened his eyes as Bill bent over him anxiously.

"Kid, wake up!" he implored, "we got to git you well, boy!" And the Kid came to himself and agreed that he certainly must buck up and get that good right ready for use against spring.

But the hand refused to heal, in spite of the constant washing with a solution of carbolic from the carefully hoarded store which Bill had treasured. The arm began to swell and sharp pains shot up and down from the shoulder. It was slowly turning a terrible dark color, and Bill dared not admit, even to himself, that it meant gangrene. With all his pagan soul he prayed to the gods of his fathers passionately to save the Kid, his Kid.

He went outside one night as the Kid lay tossing fever-

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ishly in the bunk, forgetting his fur parka, unmindful of the cold, and gazed up at the aurora borealis of the arctic region flaming whitely in the heavens and searched the cold brightness for a sign of hope. He went inside, his mind resolved. Over the snow to the coast, to doctors and healing medicines, they would go to save the Kid. And go this very night!

He worked wildly, but with method, packing grub compactly for the 500-mile journey, and bringing forth the caribou hide sacks filled with dust. They must go, too, for gold opens all doors and the Kid must live at all cost. The dogs were fat and fit from months of idleness; now they should work for their keep. He took the can filled with stinking caribou fat, in which was set a rude wick which they used in the tent, saving candles for the cabin, and put it where he could catch all the faint light to see to his packing. All night he worked, going to the Kid at intervals with water and answering his half-delirious queries. The sick man was prattling of the girl and of doings on a Harvard football field, and of the "gove'nor." It made Bill's heart ache as he listened.

Death in the wilds was his own natural end, but his companion was a product of civilization and should be back among his own people. Bill knew how the mother must be yearning and that the father would surely want his son again. The Kid wasn't bad, and now, with his thoughtless youth done with, his partner wanted them to know that the North could make a man. The Kid had saved a couple of lives along the trail coming in, and that squared a lot of things.

It was night still when Bill aroused the Kid and made him understand matters. They must travel light, because he would ride on the sled, but the dogs could make it. Just enough grub to manage, and leave the rest behind. The storms were becoming less frequent, as it neared March, and Bill assured the Kid they'd make Dyea, if they had to go that far. But he hoped to catch the doctor who was working a claim down on the MacMillan, in which case it would be easy.

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But the Kid, excited, declared he could hit the trail on his Cree snowshoes and win out, too. He stood up beside the bunk to prove his strength and looked at Bill with fever bright eyes, his cheeks burning. "I'm ready when we've fed," he exclaimed. "I know I'm sick, but I'm game. Where's the dogs, where's Mogi? All ready? And you wouldn't let me help? I'll break trail ahead and you drive!"

Bill looked at him doubtfully. One arm was useless, but the lad seemed strong. The lighter the sledge the quicker the time, and if the Kid could walk part of the way he could ride the rest, when the effort became too much. He walked steadily over to where the stove roared cheerfully and held out his good hand. Then, growing suddenly weak, he put out the hand blindly and spread it palm downward, on the smoking stove as he fell.

Bill's agony was almost as great as the Kid's as the sufferer jerked his hand away, leaving burned shreds on the stove, but neither man spoke. The flour sack, open at the top, stood next the stove, and the Kid plunged his arm down into it, then sank fainting to the floor, while Bill, rendered desperate by this new horror, ground his teeth together until they cracked.

"God!" he cried out at last. "What's he done? Don't pile it on, don't; gimme some, don't soak it all on one poor son of a gun."

But later that day, with the Kid's two arms bound and useless, which helplessness drove him to fury, they left, the dogs eager to be off, with the sick man packing the soft snow ahead, his knees aching from this strange new strain, his eyes and nostrils smarting from the frost, and his mind a blank, except that Bill had said "mush," and mush on he would, because Bill knew. Behind, Bill lashed the dog team with his whip, curling it nastily over the head of an unruly beast, and roaring out hoarse commands as they ploughed toward the Klondike region through the solemn white forests, where all was silent. The Kid said nothing, but Bill, contrary to his Indian

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nature, cursed in Cree until he lost his breath at anything and everything except the Kid.

They stopped to rest, and Bill cooked tea on a fir bough fire, and warmed part of the "sour dough" bread he had made up the night before, making sandwiches with thick, satisfying, fatty chunks of bacon in between. The Kid sat on the sledge, too tired to move until he must, his strong leg muscles aching terribly, and his burned hand and the right arm apparently trying to see which could hurt the most. His partner fed him, cursing tenderly as he forced him to swallow hot tea and to eat. Then Bill fed his dogs, yelping expectantly about them, and last of all himself.

Once during the awful trip, while men and beasts struggled on, battling with hunger, weariness and arctic cold, the Kid gave out entirely, and laid, covered by all the blankets, like one dead, on the sledge. The dogs, led by big Mogi, pulled gamely with the heavy added burden, and Bill beat them forward like a madman, with only the one thought—that they must reach the doctor's camp.

And when they arrived one afternoon a week later, pulling up at the cabin almost buried in the snow, the young fellow who greeted them told Bill that the doctor was camped somewhere up in the Tanana, to stay until spring. They remained two days, the Kid fighting manfully for life, and Bill preparing for the two hundred odd miles to the coast.

"Leave him with me," said the doctor's partner, "and you either find Doc up above, or travel light alone and bring the fellow at Dyea back."

"I'll take him," said Bill, with set teeth and bloodshot eyes. "He's got a date back in the States, and by the Lord I'll land him there!"

The Kid only muttered vaguely from where he sat in a corner looking vacantly in front of him.

Bill lost all track of time, but he knew the old trail above Miles Canyon when they struck it, with the blazes high in the tree trunks where the Yukon pioneers had marked the safest path in the days of the first rush two

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years before. The dogs were almost down and out, living on half rations and weak from dragging nearly two hundred pounds of dead weight, for the Kid had gone under completely, leaving Bill with the sagacious, husky Mogi's help, to buck the trail alone.

It was morning, Bill figured; he couldn't tell because he was struggling against snow blindness. He had staggered on for hours, urging the tired team to hasten, with Mogi keeping them in a straight line by some strange dog language expressed in short yelps and angry whines. But they could go no further, and one by one the team stopped dead, and Bill, weeping hysterically, called a halt. His first care was for the Kid. Together he and Mogi pulled at the blankets, uncovering part of the invalid's face to the air. The Kid's blue lips moved, but no sound came. The other dogs sneaked about, seeking food, then craftily buried themselves in the snow for warmth, but Mogi, whining pitifully, put his forefeet on the sledge and licked at the Kid's fur hood.

Bill, nearly beaten, begged the Kid childishly to say something—anything—and kept on shaking him. He whispered that twenty miles more would do it, and asked him if he wouldn't brace up, for the girl, if he didn't want old Bill any more. And the Kid heard.

"Say, Bill, it's all bets off with me, I know," he muttered. "And you—you tell 'em that I couldn't make it, see? Give the money—my share—to Louise, her folks are poor, and it's what I meant to do, even if she don't care any more—Bill, Bill! Don't leave me, don't!"—

Mogi, smelling death, set up a mournful howl, and Bill, arms about the Kid, sobbed out curses on a cruel fate that let a man die like this.

But the Kid's troubles were over, and the soft snow, falling quietly, covered the live man and the dead alike, while Mogi howled dismally, then crept under the sledge coverings and rested in the cheering warmth.

* * *

Down at Dyea men asked one another how the Indian

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had made the trail with four starved dogs (the rest had died along the way) and a sledge weighted with his partner's body, when Bill hit camp, gaunt and lean from hunger and blind from the white glare. "The lead dog helped," Bill explained when, after food and sleep in the "Seattle" store's bunkhouse, he came back to himself and demanded to know where they had put the Kid and his dust—and Mogi. All were safe, and when at last the steamer from the outside world arrived, unloaded, hundreds of gold hunters and started home, Bill, Mogi and the Kid's body, embalmed by the Dyea doctor, went back on her, bound for South Carolina.

* * *

There was a lawn fete in progress at the Kid's old home one July night when a tall man, black haired and solemn looking, with a big gray dog, demanded speech of the mistress of the house. She came, wondering, a handsome, gray haired woman in evening dress, and with her a younger woman, bright eyed and interested.

Bill told his tale quite simply, gazing at the one the Kid's mother called Louise, as she clutched his arm and wept wildly.

"He made good, ma'am," he said in conclusion, "an' he was my pal. Nothin's been the same since, and now I've brung out the money—and the Kid, I'm goin' back to our claim to live. He was an ace, an' he never whimpered, not once. Here's the dog he liked. Him an' me's pals now. Good-by, and good luck." He handed her a bank book and some other papers, then looked again at the girl.

"You was wrong," he said, slowly, "dead wrong, but you didn't know it. He thought a lot of you. Come on, Mogi, we got to hit the trail back to Seattle." Mogi howled once, softly, and followed Bill back to the frozen North which beckoned them.

The Rival Landladies and the Bridal Party.

NEXT to the Irving Place house of Mrs. de Shine, with whom so many of "the profession" boarded while playing New York, was the boarding house of Miss Georgie Gray, a retired variety performer. Miss Gray had been a male impersonator, in which line she had acquired fame and cash before retiring. She advertised home comforts for performers, and catered only to vaudeville people. Between her and Mrs. de Shine there was bitter feeling, and in the long Summer evenings, when both ladies sat on their front steps, they made unpleasant remarks about each other's past.

Miss Gray still affected gentlemanly airs. She wore stiff shirt waists and starched collars, large, manly shoes, scorning the more feminine kimonos in which the heavy figure of Mrs. de Shine was usually wrapped. Miss Gray wore derby hats and smoked cigars, and her voice was gruff. She discussed the late fight news and general topics with the male boarders, and declined to listen to the prattle of the ladies; while Mrs. de Shine loved nothing better than to weep with them over their hard luck, aiding them by her tender sympathy.

The Great Bodena, the comedy juggler, lived at Mrs. de Shine's during his first week in from a hard season on the road. Bodena's real name was Mike Williams, but for stage purposes his more imposing title looked better. He had been out with a troupe in which he played parts and did his act in an intermission.

The show had closed, and he had the good luck to

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book a week in Newark and another in a Fourteenth street "continuous" house. For the following week he booked four "clubs"—these being entertainments of lodges and social clubs who applied to a vaudeville agent, and he "put on" the show. The club paid him a certain sum. He engaged the artists, and the cheaper he got the acts the more he made.

At the one on Monday night, up in the wilds of Harlem, Bodena met little Flossie Hall, the singing soubrette, who worked alone. She had a better place on the bill than he. He followed an act in which a recruit from the "legit," after a society scene, killed his wife, and then poisoned himself and died very noisily, with the audience weeping and snuffing at the realism of the acting.

"How'd you go?" she asked, as he came off. She had on her street clothes.

"Rotten, thanks," he replied. "You know what a chanct a guy's got to make good in a spot like that. Them legit's ought to be kep' out of the business. They crab a good comedy act." She said it was true.

The next day as he loafed on the corner of Fourteenth street with several acrobats and dancers who were busy telling how good their acts were, and how bad their friends were, he noticed Flossie going into Miss Gray's. She nodded as she passed him, and he saw that even in daylight she wasn't bad looking.

Her clothes were not very fashionable, but they were neat and she wore no make-up on her pale face. That night the New Rochelle Comedy Four asked Bodena to come in and hear them try over some new stuff. The quartette sang several selections, after which a poker game was started.

Each man had to take turns carrying the water pitcher down to the corner, filling it there with an amber liquid topped by a white froth. The party became very cheerful, and when Bodena's second turn came he neglected to find out if the coast was clear before starting, as Mrs. de Shine had strict rules as to

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the rushing of growlers. As he went gaily down three flights of stairs the landlady's door opened softly and an angry eye noted his pitcher.

The boss met him on the second floor as he came up, with the evidence in one hand. "Well, Mista Bodena, I s'pose you call yerself a gent?" said she, sternly, "bustin' rules in a house where yuh been treated white, an' hollerin' out songs when folks is tryin' to sleep! Take that beer out of this house!"

"Oh, lemme just take this one up—the boys are waitin'," pleaded Bodena, "an' we'll be good; honest we will!" The New Rochelle Comedy Four had heard his voice and they were peeping over the banisters.

"Aw, bring it up, bo! Don't let her bluff you!" shouted Johnny Trippit, the buck dancer, who had joined the party. The thirsty quartette made sassy remarks to their landlady; and when Bodena broke from her grip and galloped upward they greeted him with cheers.

"Every one of yuh guys git out of my house!" stormed Mrs. de Shine, "an' settle before yuh vamp! That goes fur the hull bunch, an' it ain't no kid."

"Rats!" yelled Bodena. He had a little money saved up, and there were other places. But the quartette were rueful. They were broke until they got their salary Saturday night, and the settling would be a hard scratch. So next morning Tommy Willetts, the baritone, bravely faced the landlady and made a strong talk for his partners.

"A public apology fur them fresh shoots yuh made at me—an' yuh gotta make it at the table—kin square it, an' nothin' else," answered Mrs. de Shine, determinedly. "An' Mista Bodena's gotta do the same."

Bodena declined to humble himself, so he packed his two grips, and, paying his bill haughtily, he left. He applied to Miss Gray for board, and when he told her he couldn't stand any more of the De Shine food she gave him a better room than he would ordinarily

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have obtained and was very cordial. "Have a cigar?" said she, amiably, producing a case.

"Gee, I guess I got the old lady goin'," he reflected, cheerfully. Although the cigar was bad he didn't know it, and probably would not have liked the taste of a good one, anyway. At dinner his place was opposite Flossie Hall. Every time the corned beef and cabbage got near to Flossie a large burlesque lady next her grabbed the platter, helped herself liberally, and sent it down the line.

"Listen, ain't they any chanct of gettin' some meat?" demanded Flossie, finally, when Miss Gray hove in sight. But the landlady was too busy attending to a boarder who had dared complain. It was George B. Jeffreys, of Jeffreys & Jeffreys, rapid-fire talking act.

His delivery off the stage was not as fluent as when spurred on by the audience's applause, but Mr. Jeffreys's voice was loud and angry. "The bacon we et at breakfast was froze to the plate!" said he, bitterly. "You had to get a ax to chop it loose! An' this thing of never gettin' no meat but stoo is the limit!"

"Now, see here; can that line o' comedy!" shouted Miss Gray, advancing upon him. "That stuff has all been did before! People what ain't satisfied with good, pure, home cookin' better chase out o' my house! An' if you was big as a hoss an' gimme any sass I kin lick you myself!"

Bodena looked a quick look at the ferocious lady. Mr. Jeffreys, who was large and red-headed, seemed to regret his hasty remarks. "Now that'll be all right, Georgie, don't go up in the air!" he replied, soothingly. "Only a guy does sorta like a change, an' we ain't had pie for a week, either."

"I kin lick you, or six like you, with one hand tied!" repeated Miss Gray.

"Say, listen, is they any chanct of me gettin' some meat?" Poor Little Flossie was still meatless. Bodena was, as a rule, none too polite to females. But this white-faced, forlorn little girl was hungry, and

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nobody seemed to care whether she was or not. He hailed Sammy Mullet, of Mullet & Brown, comedians, who was in process of taking his sixth helping.

"Hey! Lemme have that there!" said Bodena, abruptly. He snatched the dish from Mr. Mullet's hand. Flossie sighed. If the juggler finished the meat where would she come in? "Go after it, sister!" said Bodena gallantly, and he dumped several thick slices on Flossie's plate.

He also foraged, having a true boarding house reach, and gathered in four dill pickles, some potatoes and the bread, which he shoved across to the little sou-brette. Flossie thanked him with her best stage smile. "I seen you up to the club," she ventured, and Bodena nodded. He wasn't going to get mixed up with any designing damsel, so he maintained a cool air. Flossie went on eating, but she had looked him over carefully.

His gray suit was quite smart, and his diamond horeshoe pin flashed in the most delightful way. He was young and smooth shaven and his black hair was plastered tightly down. The man with the trained ponies addressed Bodena. "Hello, Mike!" said he. "When did you get in? I jest signed with them street railway people who got a circuit. Ain't you with the big top no more?"

"Nope. Been in voddaville a year doin' a single turn," answered Bodena. "Where do you go from here?" Flossie heard this. A single act! Then he wasn't married or his wife would be working with him. She had not seen what he did at the club they had both played. Bodena and the animal man went out together.

Flossie wasn't working that week, so she went out and made several calls at various theatres where she had friends on the bills. At her agent's the next day she ran into Bodena booking some work.

"Anything for me to-day, Jules?" she inquired, hopefully. There was nothing doing. She made the weary round of the agents and went home. "I wish I had a

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good partner," she thought, sadly, as she mended her stage slippers up in her little room. "Seems like theys a million single singin' acts. Other dames got somebody to keep after the agents."

Bodena was in the hall smoking cigarettes as she went down to dinner. He handed her the milk and the butter, and speared a piece of cake which he held out on his fork. It was the best way to be sure of getting any, this securing it in advance. But he talked show business with the animal man and didn't look at Flossie. "S'cuse me," he began, when the landlady passed, "how about some pie? I can't see this here bread puddin' gag." Flossie worried on his account. Few dared to use such a commanding tone to Georgie Gray.

"They is no pie!" replied the latter, coldly.

"Well, I seen some!" Bodena gazed defiantly at her. "An' if six bum three a day acts cud get some, I guess you better pay a little attention to me!" The boarders stopped conversing. Would she send her famous right at the person who talked back to the boss? Flossie thrilled with admiration. How brave and bold he was, and even his contemptuous remarks about three-a-day turns, of which she was one, didn't anger her. She would have been two a day, as he was, had she been consulted.

"Gimme some pie!" said Bodena, loudly. The bluff went. Miss Gray was only a woman after all, and her assumed manliness was not the real thing. "Why, suttently, in that case," said she, with a propitiating smile at this belligerent recruit from the hated Mrs. de Shine's home; "Clara'll run an' git you some! Clara, run git him a piece of pie or I'll hand you a punch!"

"Two pieces!" said Bodena.

"Well, git 'im two, then," ordered Miss Gray. She approached Bodena and became confidential. "It's just like this," said she, "a hull lot of people allus say feed 'em on pie an' they don't eat s'much meat. Well, that runs fur Sweeney, that talk does. My experience

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is you kin give seven dollars' worth of pie and its like a—her doover, as the French say—they eat more meat than before, an' that's why I don't have it. A'corse you kin, or any my frens. I'm a good feller when you know me."

When the pie came Bodena caught Flossie's eye. She got the second piece. Was there ever such thoughtful courtesy? she wondered. But Bodena was only showing off. He had no feeling at all about her.

Flossie had been in the business five years. She had married an acrobat whose other wife turned up one day, and it complicated matters so that Flossie joined a burlesque show and struck out alone. Then she got into vaudeville. Some weeks she worked, and others she didn't. She had friends here and there, but one needed a "front" to make a hit with the managers, and fronts cost money.

She was going upstairs when a messenger arrived for her. A certain agent was shy an act for a benefit in New Rochelle, and there was six dollars in it if she wanted it. Six would just pay her board on Saturday night, and Flossie rejoiced. She had seven which she locked in her trunk, keeping out enough change to get there.

She was next to last on the bill, she found. Bodena was there, too. Flossie's heart began to jump when she saw his name, and some of his props and plush table covers with a gilt monogram, on two tables in the second entrance. He closed the show, and she went on just ahead of him. And when she came off, the agent had gone, leaving word for the performers to call at his office the next morning and get their money.

There was grumbling from every one, but not until she was in her street clothes, with every one out of the theatre, did she remember that she had but a nickel in her purse. "Oh, I dunno what tuh do! I can't go ask some strange people for the carfare! I wish I was dead!"

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She set her grip down in the dark street outside the stage entrance and wept forlornly. The stage door slammed shut, and a man carrying two suit cases came out. "Hey, what's up?" He had hold of her arm, before he recognized her. "Gee, it's the kid from Gray's! What's wrong?"

Bodena's voice was kind, and after a vision of appealing to anyone in a "jay" town for aid Flossie hailed him as an angel. "An' me comin' out like a slob an' leavin' money home in my 'Taylor,'" said she when he had laughed and told her to cheer up, "did he pay you?"

He hadn't paid any one, but Bodena was a wise lad, and he always carried a little money—when he had it to carry. They took up their grips and over in the station they found the other performers. The train was late.

He sat beside her when they got aboard, and then Flossie, tired by a day of tramping up and down agents' stairways, fell asleep. Bodena saw Bill Johnson, of the Four Johnsons, up ahead, with an arm around the tired Mrs. Johnson. Bill didn't seem to care who saw him, and he unpinned his wife's hat, and smoothed her hair tenderly.

Bodena was surprised at himself for being in the same seat with a soubrette, when he didn't care a rap about soubrettes. One of Flossie's hands lay limply in her lap as she breathed softly in her sleep. The glove had been mended many times, and the jacket was worn and not in the style of the moment. Somehow, he began to figure out how the little girl lived. She wasn't tough like some of them, or her clothes would have been better. She awoke suddenly and opened her eyes. She blushed when she saw him observing her, and so did Bodena. He felt foolish and wished himself away.

"Grand Central!" They were in New York. It was 12 o'clock, and Bodena and Flossie hurried to the subway station. The more he looked at her the better he

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liked her. She was so small and pretty, in spite of her paleness. "Say, kid, you're awful cute!" he remarked, and got red again. Flossie gave him a coquettish glance, and she giggled happily.

"I—sometimes I get awful lonesome!" Bodena hadn't meant to say it, and yet he did, as they dodged people coming in at the Fourteenth street entrance. He pressed Flossie's arm, and, at the risk of breaking his own, crowded his two suit cases into one hand. "We'll leave the grips an' go git some lunch," he went on.

Love had warmed his cold heart without warning, and Bodena did not even give Cupid battle. In fact, he liked it. They hurried along Irving Place. "Mrs. de Shine! They're comin'; I see 'em!" shouted a male voice, as they reached the home of Miss Gray.

The doors of the mansion de Shine opened, letting out a dim light. Mrs. de Shine, herself, in a black silk kimono, elevated her skirts, displaying some chaste, white stockings, and pattered down to the street. "This way!" she said, in her friendliest manner. "The bridal chamber's waitin' an' I got a swell lunch set out, an' not a soul but me an' Mista Johnson, property man over tuh the showshop, knows it. I knowed yuh wouldn't want a gang around!"

"But we"—Flossie began—but Mrs. de Shine's voice never stopped when it had work to do. "As soon as Johnny Trippit told me a bridal couple was comin' tuh that hussy Gawgie Gray's," she continued, "I says, 'Well,' I says, 'I'll beat her to it.' It don't make no difference tuh yuh where yuh stop, an' yuh'll git a deal here that'll tickle yuh tuh death. I—why, fur land's sake! Mista Bodena!"

She had herded them into the vestibule, the Property Man bringing up the rear. He began to laugh violently.

"Are you the bridal couple what was comin' tuh Gray's on the 'leven thirty from Buffalo?" shouted Mrs. de Shine, in amazement.

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"Gracious me!" Flossie began to laugh, too. "Why, you mean Chollie de Vere an' his wife, Erminine, the toe dancer!" she cried. "They got into Gray's this afternoon, 'cause they changed their minds an' tuck an early train."

"Cuss it!" cried Mrs. de Shine, much vexed. "Why, I even got a bottle of wine!"

"Well, that's one on you, Mrs. de Shine," remarked Bodena. "I was bound I'd see what you was up to. Still mad at me?"

"Oh, g'wan! Suttently I ain't!" Mrs. de Shine was smiling now with the rest. "Honest tuh Heavings, I got an idee! I'll tell yuh what I'll do!"

"What?" asked the Property Man.

"If you folks'll git married I'm blessed if I don't give yuh the bridal chamber two weeks free an' the lunch goes, too, to-night, an' I'll pay the minister! Gawgie Gray ain't tuh have the laff on me. Whadda yuh say?"

Bodena looked at Flossie, who looked at the floor. What use in delay when one's mind was made up? "How about it, kid?" he asked.

"It goes with me!" said Flossie.

The Emperor's Pipe.

THE seeing New York tourists were grumbling. Their guide had led them into a few mild dives in Chinatown and to the Oriental bazaar, where he clearly had an arrangement with the astute Chinese gentlemen in charge of it.

"Now, you kin buy Chinese souvenirs real cheap here," he explained, "while all other places is bunks."

Many of the tenderfeet took his advice. "Oh, Harold, see this sweet vase!" cried the young woman with the peek-a-boo waist. "Oh, how I love Chinese things. How I wish I had one!"

The wretched Harold sighed. Then he smiled rather sadly, because he had hopes of making the lady Mrs. Harold, and it would not be discreet to discourage her innocent desires in the early stage of his courtship. "Yes, Mary, you shall have it," he said, and then separated from nine dollars.

When the tourists had ceased to purchase, the guide took them away. He would return for his percentage next day. Mary's brother, Bob, was young but quite experienced.

"We're not really seeing anything," he remarked. "There are lots of joints where the people are worth observing. This man isn't going in any of 'em. I don't want to go in that restaurant and sit around with a mob of lobsters. Do you, Pop?"

His father looked at the other docile tourists trailing across the street in the wake of the guide.

"Bah!" said he, sneeringly. "Seeing New York! Your Maw and I saw more out home in K. C. when we

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went slumming. These here Easterners weary me. What's Mary got in that bundle?"

Bob snickered. "She shook him down for some of that truck," he replied, indicating the infatuated Harold. Pop laughed. "Well, once don't hurt, but she mustn't keep it up," he said. "Say, let's break away from this outfit and go in one of these concert halls."

Mary and Harold were called, and with Maw and Pop leading they entered a place which promised well. It was lively, and smelly, and seemed tough enough to satisfy the most exacting slummer. Pop felt coltish. He immediately bade the waiter bring liquids. "Got any champagne?" he asked. Mary and Maw rustled into grimy seats, creating a mild sensation among the regulars.

The tip went around that a live one was buying wine. The party had a second bottle, and everything began to seem jollier. Then the man with one eye out of commission and the fried egg hat edged over to Pop. "Mebbe youse'd like to see sumpin' nobody kin unless they're knowed," he whispered mysteriously; "a poity's acrost the street an' he's smokin'. Fur a case apiece I kin show youse round."

"Come on, girls and boys," said Pop, gaily, "we're going to a hop joint." Mary gave a little squeal of pleasure. The more refined and dainty the girl the more she dotes on delving into corners where dirty misery exists. She's "studying human nature." Followed by the envious glances of all the ladies and gents in the place, "Johnny Lookout," the one-eyed person, escorted his victims out and up the street. Climbing a flight of stairs they passed through the kitchen of a Chinese restaurant into an ancient tenement. The guide knocked gently on a door, while the visitors waited expectantly in the dimly lit hall.

"Hey, Mock!" he repeated.

"Come in," said a voice in reply. The party trooped in. Johnny Lookout had done more for his employers than do most of his kind, for they found themselves in a large room where various persons were actually "smoking hop." "These is frens o' mine from uptown," said he; "bring a couple shells an' a stem."

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The Chinaman nodded. "Nobody but the Snitcher over in the corner," said he, "all right?" "Tell him it's fine," said Johnny Lookout. Mary's family and Harold murmured politely in imitation of their new friend.

They proceeded slowly to the end of the room. Paw's foot struck something and he jumped back nervously. "Tain't nawthin' but a mattress, Gov-nor," said Johnny Lookout, reassuringly. "We'll all get planted on it, see, an' then youse won't be a kippin' on the hoid floor."

"Lie down! Oo-oo!" breathed Mary. "Oh, Harold, I'm afraid." Harold was none too steady himself. Low voices were all around from where the little flames of the oil lamps burned. The air was thick with opium smoke. Under Mr. Lookout's able direction they assumed recumbent positions upon the mattress. There was no room for Harold, so he doubled up on the soiled floor beside them and wondered dismally what his new suit would look like when he emerged into civilization again.

"Now, we're all fixed," declared Mr. Lookout, pleasantly; "ain't this cosy?" Every one hurriedly replied that it was very nice indeed. "Hey, Snitcher," said he, "come over here. I want youse to meet some me frens." From a near by bunk an emaciated man, yellow of face and pale of eye, arose.

"Hello, Lookout," he said languidly, "what youse doin' here?" "Now this guy'll take a shot for youse fur a dime a shot," whispered Lookout, "the old morph, y'know, Gov'nor—or he'll hit the stem. All youse gotta do is to stake him to the price of the dope. A'course that ain't sayin' youse can't hand him sumpin' if youse feel that way."

All declared they preferred to watch the versatile Snitcher smoke. The Chinaman brought two clam shells filled with hop. "They's a lot of sufferin' down here since that Frisco thing comes off," said Mr. Lookout, "with hop goin' to fifteen bones a can, 'stead of seven."

"I seen the time in Saint Looey when it's \$22 a can," said the Snitcher; "take that bum pipe back, Mock. I'll use me own." With every eye upon him, the Snitcher

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"rodded" (cleaned) his "stem." Then with the yen hook he took a little lump of the dope, placed it on the bottom of the pipe's bowl, and held it over the flame. The hop bubbled and smoked as he carefully "cooked" his pill. "Some poities," he said dreamily, "boins their pill, cause they dunno their business." Breathlessly, the slummers and slummeresses observed him as he put the pipe to his lips, drew in a long breath and began to smoke. With the "needle" he worked the pill, pushing the last bit close to the tiny hole, through which the hop connected with his waiting interior. With a long, contented sigh, he laid back.

The spectators felt ill from sniffing the unaccustomed, stifling odor. The Snitcher enjoyed several more in rapid succession, there being no need for economy while Pop was buying. At last he spoke:

"To look at this here stem of mine," he began, "youse wouldn't see nawthin' much to it. But I wouldn't take a century note fur it, an' I need money bad. It ain't the wort' of it, but the associations. I could tell a tale about that."

Johnny Lookout kicked young Bob. "He's startin'," he said. "Listen."

"This here pipe's onct the Emperor of Chiney's favorite," went on the story teller. "He's got udders, all in-laid an' fixed up nobby wit' jools, but this here plain old stem, it's the one he gets his gladness from. Now, one day the court chamberlain's carryin' the Emp's layout up fur his before supper smoke, an' he drops it. They's a big crack in it when he takes it in, an' the Emp gits sore an' truns it away. The palus' chef gits a hold of it an' it stays in his family till one day he cooks up sumpin' the boss don't like an' they boils him in oil. See?

"The stem's took by a prince, who gets captured by robbers an' took off to the mountains. Bimeby the head robber gits to smokin' it, an' whenever he does he has luck. The Emp ain't had none since he lost it, an' a gen'ral alarm is out from P'lice Headquarters tuh git this back.

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The robber hears it, an' bein' scared of lettin' it be knowed he's got it, he ketches a ship an' lands in Frisco.

"But a Chink gambler cops it on this robber felly an' beats it to Noo York. One night I'm a layin' on the hip, smokin' up a few, an' the robber guy comes in, bunks down by me, an' tells me this here tale. He's leary that the elbows is after him, so he leaves it wit' me. The High-binders is been lookin' fur it ever since, cause they'll know it by the crack, an' the Emp's initials, he cuts in one day. 'E. C.' Here they are. See? I been keepin' it fur a ransom ever since, an' I wouldn't take less'n fifty anyway fur the Emp'ror's pipe."

Pop whispered to Maw. "Will you take twenty?" he asked suddenly.

"Hand it here," replied the Snitcher. "I wouldn't never a took it, but I got to git money."

The party left soon afterward, somewhat stupid from breathing the smoke. The Snitcher called the Chinaman. "Scratch 'E. C.' on another pipe, an' don't wake me up less'n a good mark comes in," said he, "an' bring me another shell."

Confession of a Con Man.

Pinafore and Cleopatra Fail to Make a Match.

PINAFORE DANNY and myself were leaning against the rail of an ocean liner as she ploughed through a heavy sea somewhere off the Grand Banks, booked to Cherbourg, thence on a tour of various European watering places. I had spotted a prize worth our skill after luncheon on the first day out, and having doped out a plan of action, I was engaged in giving my young partner his instructions. The prize had money, a chaperon, and, of course, a father at the end of the line which we were rapidly leaving behind. She was not pleasing to look upon, as a true heroine of romance should be. She was, in fact, so absolutely ugly and stupid that Pinafore was in a state of rebellion. He declared that, sooner than make love to that old "battleaxe," as he disrespectfully termed our fair one, he'd jump overboard.

"Why the devil can't you con her along and nail her coin?" he demanded peevishly; "you got more sense than I have. I'm sure to make some break, and the stuff will be off! Gee! she's so damned ugly. Duke! Why, the old fairy's got a harelip, and she ain't got the sense to even get a good match when she bought that false front on that blonde wig of hers. She's an awful thing." He sighed dismally and gazed sadly out upon the gray waters which leaped about us. "I thought," he continued moodily, "that we were coming over to enjoy ourselves. I'd rather be doing a bit in stir than hang around her. It's worse'n working."

Then, indeed, I realized how deep was Pinafore's aver-

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sion to the task I had set him, for work to him spells unutterable horror. I could not forbear smiling at his forlorn attitude.

"Pinafore," said I, gently, putting on my monocle, so that I might search his features as he listened, "you are so confoundedly young and foolish! To be sure, I did say that we would gamble a bit, and see the pretty girls, and all that, but here a chance, absolutely unexpected, comes along and you would sidestep it for a few brief weeks of pleasure! My boy, if you listen to me we'll frame up this young woman and the chaperon, who's a most silly person, and have 'em over to London, and you married to the millions, two days after we land!"

"And leave me married to that old crow while you skiddoo," groaned Pinafore. "I can't do it. I'd rather go back and be a dip, or follow the trots again. It's easier, and at least a guy ain't tied. Money ain't everything."

"There you again demonstrate your youth and inexperience, Pinafore, lad," said I. "Money is everything. Money—enough of it—can throw a roseate hue about even a harelip and a squint."

"And her name—Cleopatra H. Jones—it's horrible!" he burst out, angrily. "And she's always grinning like a Cheshire cat when I pass her chair and dropping things so I'll pick 'em up. Her work's coarser than ours; it is, on the level."

"The name undoubtedly is distressingly common," I remarked cheerfully; "but you could change it. We have a selection of really superior names, so hers don't matter. As for me, I'd marry her, or any other female with a bank roll, if I could get her. But she prefers you. All women wouldn't, but she does. I'm weary of leading a catch-as-catch-can existence, and I'm an old man. I've made you a gentleman in appearance and taught you a gentleman's habits. You're a creditable thief, and I made you. Now you must get out and nail this skirt. It's only fair. You can leave her afterward. I'm satisfied if you simply marry her, as we'll throw the harpoon into her old

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man and shake him down to a fare-you-well. Does it look any brighter?"

"And I needn't stick?" he asked, his face clearing. I assured him he need not. Once having seen reason Pinafore became most amiable, and now smiled upon me, showing all his nice white teeth, and said thoughtfully that it wasn't such a bad plan after all.

"Come into the smoking room and drink a pint of fizz," I suggested, "and I'll then tip you off as to the proper mode of stalking Cleopatra, of the house of Jones."

* * *

Just then the lady herself passed with the faithful chaperon, a pinkish complexioned, fair-haired woman of uncertain age, who giggled foolishly at all times and constantly discoursed on the absorbing topic of dear Cleopatra's money and of Cleopatra. We had met the day before, in the informal manner of ocean travellers, when I had presented the card of "Colonel J. Warrington Desmond, Durango, Mexico" (my temporary title), and introduced my nephew, John Desmond, heir to my own estate and the immense interests of my brother, his father. I modestly confided to the chaperon, after I had tenderly wrapped her in my own vicuna rug, first ordering the deck steward to place our chairs in a more sheltered spot, that my family owned at least a quarter of Mexico, all of which that young rascal, my nephew, would some day rule over. I spoke in such glowing terms of our Mexican home that she became tremendously interested and vowed that she would love to see such a garden spot.

I concealed a smile as she artlessly desired to ride madly over the rolling pampas with the warm south breeze in her face. She would hardly have added to the picture, for she weighed at least 200 and was consequently a bit stout for horseback exercise. She said that Cleopatra's father was a perfect dragon, watching the dear girl's movements like a jailer, and this was her first outing. Only his trust and confidence in the stout lady had made the trip possible, and Cleopatra, only a year out of

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the convent, was as timid as a startled fawn. I had another look at the prize at this. She was the toughest looking fawn I had ever seen, but somehow the money made it easier to bear after one became more used to the idea of her.

Pinafore had rudely left Miss Jones, as I found when I suddenly turned to see how he was getting on, and the timid Cleopatra was gazing after him with soulful eyes. I immediately made myself agreeable to her, remaining with the ladies until the bugle sounded for luncheon, after which I discovered Pinafore cutting the cards with a man from Chicago at \$2 a crack. Seeing him thus busily and properly attending to business (he was winning) I refrained from rebuking him until the Chicago man got enough and we were left alone. Then it was that I explained to Pinafore that she of the harelip was heiress to millions and daughter of old Jones, the Butte mining king. I knew all about the layout, and Fate had played into our hands by throwing the shrinking fawn into our clutches. She would be ours before father got wise, when it would be up to him to gracefully take his medicine and buy his son-in-law off. This was better than gambling for it.

Pinafore, mindful of my warning, was most gracious, and Cleopatra lavished upon him smile after smile. He returned these with a rather sickly grin at first, but later his sense of humor aided him and he smiled back engagingly. The chaperon glanced at me significantly. I offered my arm, and words being unnecessary, we left our cherished ones to prattle as young people will. That was what I laughingly said to the chaperon after we were out of earshot, which she answered with a deep sigh.

"Cleopatra has seen so few young men, Colonel Desmond," she bleated presently. "And she seems quite taken with your nephew. He really seems a charming young fellow, and he has such taking ways." (She had unconsciously perpetrated a jest. Had she ever noted Pinafore "taking" a leather she would have admired him even if she were shocked, as his work is certainly clever.)

I pressed her fat arm as the ship rolled, and I steadied

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her footsteps. "The boy talked of her all last night," I said laughingly. "I should say it was a case—eh, Mrs. Morgan?"

"Dear me!" she exclaimed, pleasantly disturbed. "Fancy! Really, her father would want to kill me, Colonel. But it would be a good joke, really it would."

It seemed almost too easy. "Is she kidding me?" I asked myself, sternly. This was going to be a case of sit back and let 'em throw money at you. Well, it happened every day, and two females gadding about alone were as likely to consider every good looking man they saw as perfectly eligible, without taking the formality of positively ascertaining his antecedents. It was not surprising, at that, for if ever a man inspires confidence and respect at the first glance that person is myself, while Pinafore has the air of a well-bred, up-to-date young gentleman of good position. (As he is. There is not a grafter in the country who will not tip his hat to Pinafore Danny, Duke Merrill's pupil.)

I had the head steward change our seats to the table at which sat Cleopatra and her chaperon. Neither entirely gave way to the seasickness which several times threatened to overcome them, and I exerted all my ingenuity in contriving, with our table servant's aid, light dishes which would tempt their faint appetites. Cleopatra began to look upon me as a father, and I joked Pinafore upon the possibility of her affections switching to me if the voyage should last much longer. This did not create the amusement on his part I had looked for.

"You ain't got any right to butt in," he retorted heatedly. "And me listening to her gassing for hours every day! It's a blame shame, and I won't stand for it! I've set out to hook up with this fairy, and I'm going to. Now you keep off!"

* * *

I laughed until my eyes watered, while he sat twisting about uncomfortably on the sofa in our promenade deck stateroom, growling to himself.

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"Well, by Jove! your'e a wonder!" I said admiringly. "Five days ago you were willing to take to the briny deep to escape her. I thought you'd prefer my becoming her husband. We could adopt you. I think you're falling in love with her."

"Oh, hell! don't talk like a fish!" he cried. "I've made up my mind to it, that's all, and when I begin on a string I like to play it out."

"I shan't give you a battle this time," I answered. "Cleopatra's a charming creature, but I'm too old for her. I shall come and be godfather to the children and give you all good advice."

"You're the best old guy on earth!" he declared, beginning to laugh himself. "Say, wouldn't it be funny if I really did get used to her and stuck at the job? I'd laugh myself. I don't look at her, you see, and we get along great that way. Last night, sitting in the steamer chairs in the dark, and having a cognac after dinner, I figured out I could stand it. If it was only dark always!" he ended regretfully.

"You might veil her, like a harem beauty," I said idly. "That's a good scheme. I rather like her, myself; but the chaperon ought to go overboard. She's quite the gabbiest mortal I ever met. Cleopatra's got her beat a block. We need the chaperon's aid at present or she'll be cabling the old guy to set the gendarmes on us as we leave the boat. but when the knot is tied it's back to the tall pines for the fat lady."

"You bet," he agreed, fervently. "Darn her hide, she keeps patting me on the arm and telling me her dear dead husband looked just like me. Do you know, I thought of a funny thing to-day?" I intimated that I would like to hear about it. "Sometimes," he said speculatively, "that Cleopatra's got a real coony look, Duke. I turned around quick once, and she was looking at me and grinning in her wisest way. But she quit and put on her baby voice and wanted to know if I'd ever been in love with any other girl. But she looked real wise for a minute."

"It's not unusual for females to have moments of wis-

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dom," I replied, "but they don't occur often. You probably imagined the crafty gaze."

"But she did it to-day again," he said, lowering his voice cautiously, "and, say, it was queer. I said I had a great friend back in New York, and his name was Johnson, and that he had a funny nickname—"Slippery Johnson."

"You're an ass!" I broke out, exasperated. "Suppose she were to mention it. There's dozens about who've read about Slippery Ed cracking cribs and giving the elbows from the Central Office the ha-ha the last time he turned a trick! That would look fine!"

"You wouldn't let me finish," he said. "By George! when I said that she ups and says: 'No, he ain't in New York, he's'—— And then she gets red and shuts up like a clam. It got me to thinking."

"Nothing to that!" I said. "She's read about him, and, suddenly realizing that it wouldn't look well to speak of such a man, she stopped. This is liable to make trouble if she begins wondering how you know him. You haven't the sense of an infant goat."

"I know it," he admitted contritely; "but she's been fine ever since. I've got her going, and we're to elope and leave you and the Elephant (this was his playful term for the chaperon) and put you hep afterward. She must have a wad of notes somewhere, Duke, because she said they had a time changing five thousand into French coin. Gee! they spend plenty, I guess. She's always talking about my place in Mexico and my coin. That's a nit."

"She's used to hearing about money—old Jones rolls in it," I remarked. "And now slide into your evening clothes, and we'll go in to dinner."

* * *

"Cherbourg at 1 o'clock, Colonel," said the chaperon, as she waddled up to me, clothed in a long loose coat which made her look even wider than usual, and clinging tightly to a gold chain purse and a leather bag, in which

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she evidently carried valuables, as she kept a careful eye upon it.

"You and I," I began, continuing a conversation which had commenced the night before, "are to get into the Paris express, discreetly refrain from noticing the absence of my nephew and Miss Jones, and go on to Paris. They cannot get married in France, as banns must be published for three weeks and birth certificates shown, with other embarrassing ceremonies, so they will simply remain aboard; go on to Southampton and be made one there, whence they will wire us to the Ritz."

"Oh, dare I leave her?" she asked the heavens, gazing upward with hands clasped upon the leather bag. "But yes, I will. Her heart has told her what to do, Colonel, and who are we that we should thrust asunder two loving hearts?"

"Dear madame, you are a model chaperon," I murmured, gallantly kissing one pudgy hand as she laid it, like a limp fish, upon the rail. "It would be too cruel. We have thirty minutes more. Yonder are the torpedo boats of the French navy—those long, gray monsters."

We discoursed at length upon sunny France, whose shores lay near at hand, as the liner steamed toward Cherbourg harbor, where the tender would meet us to convey passengers and their luggage to shore.

Then at last we were at anchor, watching the little tender coming out to us. There was a fine bedlam of sounds down where the sailors were getting out the luggage, with room stewards hustling back and forth, carrying bags and hatboxes, packages and rolls of steamer rugs.

Pinafore brushed past me in the crowd.

"It's all right," he said, exultingly. "She's to stay in her cabin until it's safe. I'll wire from Southampton, and bring her back to Paris, because you've got to engineer the deal with the old man."

"Farewell, my blushing bridegroom," I said, and he nodded with a wink.

The chaperon had herded a couple of stewards bearing her various small belongings over to where I stood. "Put

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them down, and put the lot together on the tender," she commanded. Then, turning to me: "Oh, Colonel, I'm so nervous I'm a perfect wreck! Really, I feel dreadful, criminal, don't you know."

"Brace up, dear Mrs. Morgan," I begged. "Cleopatra's perfectly safe with such a fine big fellow as John to look out for her."

People were all around us. Suddenly I became aware that a hand was reaching for my wallet. On principle, knowing what a cinch it is to abstract a wallet from a rear trousers' pocket, I never carry more than a two dollar note in one. But I was curious. Mrs. Morgan was chattering excitedly like a magpie. She did not look at me, but still I knew that my friend, the chaperon, was frisking me. I let her take it, while she kept on talking. Inwardly I marveled, for she had me guessing. It was far too well done for a kleptomaniac, unless one with a long experience. I knew where the wallet was, too. It had gone into a slit at one side of the long coat, either into a pocket of that garment or into a pocket of the gown beneath. But I couldn't get over it.

The crowd surged toward the gangplank, impatient to be first off, when the luggage had been transferred and passengers permitted to follow it. I drew my fat friend close in the crush and investigated the coat with the speed which has made me famous among the topnotchers in our set. I had it, and with it a roll of English or French notes, which crackled delightfully as I crushed them skilfully and deftly slid them into a certain pocket of my own, which is not readily accessible, as it is situate inside the lining of the top of my overcoat sleeve, and I must do an acrobatic stunt to reach it. She was still chatting.

We were on the gangplank. I looked above, and on the saloon deck was Pinafore, and behind him a red Tam O'Shanter which Cleopatra had sported during the voyage. He ducked as I caught his eye, then appeared again, and peered down at the deck of the tender, covered as it was with luggage and excited persons. His mouth opened,

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as if in astonishment, then he instantly wigwagged me with our familiar signal to look below.

There stood "Slippery" Johnson, an expectant grin upon his face. What in time was that crook doing here? I inquired of myself. It was pretty near the limit.

"Hello, Duke!" he said as I confronted him, "how's the old pal? I see you met my"—here he stopped and looked puzzled. The chaperon passed him with a stony face, but he caught her arm. "Hey, Kate, you fool!" he said quickly, "nothin' doin', old gal. This mark of yours is Duke Merrill, the flyest one of our bunch. I don't quite see what you're up to."

* * *

But the chaperon saw, and so did I, for I'm an old fox and have seen a lot. "Frisco Kate," I whispered to her. "Well, well! No wonder you nailed my wallet. I was up a tree. But why the dickens are you leaving the live one and the coin behind? Cleopatra, I mean."

"What's it all about? Be sociable," said "Slippery," joining in; "this is my wife, Duke."

It only took two minutes for us all to understand one another. "Cleopatra" wasn't any more old Jones's daughter than I was, but Slippery's wife had booked her as "Miss C. Jones." Miss Cleopatra Jones, of Montana, taken ill at the last minute, had cancelled her booking and our two friends had got her room, an extra good one. The passenger list fooled everybody, and "Slippery's" wife, seeing in Pinafore and myself a pair of rich marks, was astonished and charmed to find that her ugly friend, Nellie Lynch, the shoplifter, had made such an instantaneous impression. She planned a quick campaign, considering me quite as much of a fool as I did her. Pinafore's slip they figured out as a mere coincidence, supposing that his acquaintance was a person of far different habits than the real "Slippery."

"As Cleopatra's not an heiress and neither is Pinafore an heir, I'd better blast their young hopes and get their baggage off," said I when I had recovered from the shock.

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But both were coming down the gangplank as I spoke. Thed had indulged in a heart-to-heart talk, too, and all bets were off.

"We're going to Paris!" shouted Pinafore. "Gee! this is a rum go, Duke! What do you think?"

"Shut up!" I said, with a laugh. "Get your trunk off and we'll talk it over on the train. You're doomed to single blessedness, Kid, for a while yet."

"Cleopatra" smiled. "I thought I'd die laughing at his making love," she observed, "and me with a husband doing his bit back in Auburn. It was a perfect scream, wan't it, Kate?"

But "Slippery's" wife, our fat chaperon, was in distress. "Good God!" she exclaimed, in horror. "Slippery! Your fall money! It's gone. I had it in my secret pocket!"

"Allow me," said I, courteously, doing my contortion act and bringing forth the roll of notes I had purloined. "I think this must be it."

Pinafore guffawed loudly. "Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive," he quoted. "Ain't we a grand bunch? I guess it's an even bet all around."

Pinafore and "The Duke" Skin a Corporation.

"THESE bloomin' crowds ain't got a kettle (watch) to every ten guys," said Pinafore in my ear as we stood smoking our cigars on the rear of a Broadway car.

"Nix, to your back!" I whispered, warningly. "There's Bill Funston from the Central Office behind you. Get off." He swung off at Thirtieth street, and I followed.

We were in bad luck, for our two recent elaborately planned affairs (robbery is a word the use of which grates on my sensitive ears) had resulted in the most annoying failures, hence we were playing painfully close to the cushion. But suddenly an idea had entered my mind, and to think is to act with me, to which is due my present eminence in our profession.

"We'd better blow this burg for a while, Duke," said Pinafore, as we strolled through to Sixth avenue. "When it comes to a point where parties like us got to dip for grub money, it's pretty tough. If we don't get a piece of change soon we'll have to hit a freight when we go, too."

"We'll go, but not far," I replied. "I've got a scheme. You shall go to work."

"Work?" repeated Pinafore, horrified at such a suggestion. "Me work? You must be bughouse."

"Between ourselves, Pinafore," said I, pleasantly, "you really should be driving a truck, you know. But thanks to my superior mental equipment you live in vice and luxury. Temporarily, you shall go to work. It will be merely to further my plan, and, as you have just observed, we need the money, my lad."

Pinafore had difficulty in regaining his composure, and I could not blame him for objecting to become a working person, forced to mingle, of necessity, with the common people. I have trained him so that he has a proper contempt for the wretched drones whose earnings we acquire at times.

"You shall be a street car conductor," I continued, while Pinafore shuddered at the thought, gazing gloomily at his natty patent leather shoes, as we walked up the street. "That you will find easy. The only qualifications necessary are to be able to growl threateningly when a wretched passenger gets on or off, scowl at all and sundry, and act generally as if you even hated yourself. Dost like the picture?"

"No!" replied Pinafore, emphatically. "And I'd punch some mug in the lamp before I'd been on an hour, too!"

"Then you shall get the job," I returned, firmly. "Because that's exactly what I want you to do. Thus you will have a brief respite from good manners, as you have an unaccountable desire to be a rowdy, anyway."

"Quit kiddin'," he said, with a laugh. "What's comin' off?" Thereupon I confided to Pinafore as much as seemed wise concerning my idea for replenishing our lean bankroll. As he humorously observed, we hadn't the price to buy a flea a wrestling jacket. However, no one would have suspected it from our appearance.

One penalty of success is that while there are a hundred places where one can, if he will, procure money from hitherto respectful friends, let him once take advantage of these opportunities, and it is all off. The fellow who, when up against it, tells no one, but simply scratches along until something turns up, always has them guessing.

So, now, although I knew plenty of men at the track, along Broadway or among the grafters, who would be glad to lend Duke Merrill, toplineer among the "con" men, I asked no favors. Our jewelry, selected with care from among our gleanings in that line, was down in McAlender's, hocked for all we could get on it, and our clothes, excepting two suits apiece, were down on the

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Bowery. The man who took them said he had never seen garments of such fine cut and texture before. Pinafore, being young and foolish, no sooner found himself without enough to buy a cold bottle when it suited his fancy than he was for making many rash and indiscreet moves, but my experienced hand held him back.

"But suppose the company won't give up?" he inquired, when we were seated in a cheap restaurant, preparatory to ordering a modest dinner.

"Bah!" I retorted, irritably. "How you dig up hurdles to jump over before you get to them! They will give up. Meanwhile, run across the street and see what you can get on my gold tie catch. I see I overlooked a bet, and it's a pipe it's good for ten." Pinafore hurried out on his mission, while I devoted a few moments to serious thought. Our business was, indeed, in a bad way at present in New York, with gambling only going on when the player had passed the pickets at the double doors without a challenge, and the police butting in where they should remain out.

* * *

Alas, the days of yore are gone, and the Jeromes, McAdoos and Parkhursts, and the sniveling "committees on vice" have all contributed their little share to drive the stars of my class to most distasteful petty work, where once they scorned to go after less than thousands. Fancy it, even I have lately been driven to sliding my hand into a gentleman's pocket, abstracting therefrom his roll. And the size of some of these same rolls leads me to suspect that ours is not the only industry which is not as profitable as it once was. Then, too, the modern man has an exasperating habit of doing business by check, and after the most delicate handling, often we find that a few blank checks and a "finiph" or so are all a wallet contains.

In the old days, when a man had a good sized wad, he carried it about, flashing it pridefully, so that a crook had a chance. Now half of the mild sports of the present drink mineral water only, and are almost as smart as we

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are. Why, the next generation of us will be obliged to go into vulgar trade, unless conditions take a turn for the better.

"I got \$12, Duke," said Pinafore, returning as the waiter set out our meal on a very soiled tablecloth. "Say, it looks like a house and lot, don't it? I wish I had the \$50 I staked Lefty Smith to a week ago. He's pinched, anyway. So it didn't do him no good."

"'Any' good, Pinafore," I corrected, gently. "You're not going to be a conductor long, so don't practise bad English."

"Ain't it funny hōw, when you're real hungry, any oid thing tastes good?" asked Pinafore, boyishly. "This hamburger's bully, and kind of a rest, too, from curried stuff in Indian rooms, and course dinners, and all that."

"I prefer proper service, and food prepared by a chef," I answered. "Still, as I have told you often, we must take things as they come."

* * *

Our old pal, Barney Gallagher, had a part to play in the coming drama, while I, until the last act, merely stage managed the production. Barney, like Pinafore, was dissatisfied with what he had to do.

"Why can't you do it, and let me do yours?" he asked, as we sat at a table in the rear of his bar that night.

"Can either of you make any one think you're a gentleman, and especially one who is also a lawyer?" I retorted, warmly. "Not unless I'm behind you to keep your feet in the path. If you don't want to come in, you may stay out."

"Oh, I'm wed yez, Dook," said Barney, hastily. "Only Pinafore's liable to slain me around some, and I'd hate to light on me bum wing."

Pinafore grinned in anticipation of what he would do to friend Barney, who frequently shared in our adventures.

It is Barney's impression that when we get a sucker for a bunch of coin, his share equals ours, and as I divide

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the money he is not likely to find out his mistake. We always prune Barney's bit, because we can spend our gains so much better than he, and it does him as much good as if he got more. Of course, Pinafore and I split even, for with my side kick at least, of all the world, I am on the level. More so than I am with myself, for there are various fictions which I have repeated so often that I cannot remember the truth of the matters now.

Barney was permitted to finance the venture to the extent of furnishing the cash, and as to whether the subsequent proceedings in which we took part occurred in fair Manhattan or in another large city, discretion prompts me that silence is my best course. Then I gave my orders, and when Pinafore heard that he was expected to hunt for a job with the street railway, like any other honest applicant, he was for backing out. No doubt he had expected, knowing my connections in many circles usually not open to grafters, that I would provide the place, but it was necessary that he apply in person.

He got it, too, at once, so he must have made a hit, and for two days he traveled up and down the line, while the car's regular conductor showed him how to ring up fares and signal the motorman. Pinafore rather enjoyed the novel experience, especially as he netted a diamond pin, a doorkey and \$8 from a lady's wristbag. Hanging open as it was, a positive invitation to him to investigate its contents, he accepted, and quickly transferred what it contained to his change pocket.

Barney and I amused ourselves by catching his car at intervals and observing him at his duties. The manner in which he roared "Fare!" was truly ferocious, and he made no exception in our case, which was being altogether too zealous, Barney declared, but Pinafore winked at us as he went past. So we forgave him.

He had quite a little pile of souvenirs from each of his five days, and had it not been advisable for us to act at once I should have kept him at such paying employment for a longer period.

He said the funniest thing was to see the passengers,

suspicious of one another, crowd close to the good, if impatient, conductor, and away from one another. Once he politely warned a dame that she might lose her pearl-studded watch, displayed in foolish feminine fashion, pinned to the front of her gown.

She pertly informed him that she guessed she knew her business, and that he was a pretty fresh conductor. Naturally, it gave Pinafore a thrill of pleasure to split her out from the ornament as she got off and to listen to her woeful complaints as she climbed back on the car and shouted for the police.

Pinafore gravely pointed to an innocent man hurrying across the street, whereat she leaped off and gave chase. He only regretted that his car went so fast that he missed the finish. It was rather a nice watch. At a certain place kept by an acquaintance of mine I exchanged it for twenty.

We had our wardrobe back again on the proceeds of Pinafore's harvest, and when our tired laborer had taken his tub and assumed proper evening clothes we all dined together, conversing pleasantly on live topics of the day, for I make it a rule to avoid talking shop while at dinner. It's such beastly bad form, and, while Barney's reminiscences of noted crooks are interesting, they are not always suitable where the servants are about with wide open ears.

* * *

On the sixth morning the time was ripe. Barney was planted at a certain corner, where Pinafore's car (a closed one, for which I had been waiting—an open one not being suitable for our purpose) passed, and I hailed it and "stepped lively" as the loud mouthed conductor bade me with a most insulting air.

Dressed as I was, in a dark summer suit built by a really good London tailor, a natty straw hat and low shoes, and carrying my morning papers, I looked with my gray hair and distinguished presence a most respectable person. The conductor behaved shockingly, bellowing at ladies bent on

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shopping, frightening the timid, and refusing to stop until it pleased him.

A lady sitting next me addressed me: "That conductor appears absolutely drunk, sir; do you not agree with me?" Soothingly I replied that the brutes employed by the company were a crying disgrace to the city. Various passengers took note of the conductor's number, evidently intending to report him.

A poorly dressed man, who lurched unsteadily about, got on. He fell into the corner nearest the door and quietly went to sleep. (Barney should have been on the stage, for his portrayal was excellent.)

The conductor, stopping on the way to shout "Fare!" at me, which caused me to indignantly announce that I had paid it once (also to nudge his foot with mine, as a warning that I desired no interpolated lines), shook the drunk. The latter opened one eye, chortled some unintelligible words, and drowsed off. Finally, while the other occupants of the car gazed at the sad sight, he sat up, reached into his waistcoat pocket, and slowly counted out five pennies into one hand.

"Here, take it," he said, thickly, tendering the coins.

"I'll do nawthin' of the kind, see?" yelled the conductor, offensively; "pay your fare with sumpin' else or I'll trow you off the car!"

The drunk began to argue and raised one hand in protest at such unreasonable conduct. It was clear he had no hostile purpose, yet the conductor poked one fist into the poor drunk's eye, and before any one could move he had yanked the victim out of his seat and, dragging him outside, hurled him from the car.

I calmed those about me, begging them not to descend to the conductor's level by making an assault on him (Pinafore could have put the lot out in one round), but to see the matter through in the right way. But the drunk was not yet beaten. He had run after the car, jumped aboard, and now, more soberly, he again tendered his fare to the conductor, this time holding out a quarter. He held his side and groaned piteously.

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"Internal injuries from the fall," said a grave old lady. The conductor had retired to the platform, where, with lowering brow, he watched the passengers, who held an indignation meeting.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said I, emphatically, as I supported the shaking form of the drunk, "I am a lawyer of this city. I will see that this man gets justice from a railroad company which should have its officials indicted"——

Here I was interrupted by enthusiastic murmurs and remarks. I resumed: "It will cost him nothing for my services."

"Plaze, sorr, git their names and addrethes," piped the injured victim.

"Certainly, I almost forgot," I replied. "Who will favor me? I shall take the suffering martyr to my own home, and procure medical aid at once. This is no case for the police, who are as bad as the conductor."

In a body the passengers presented their cards, and several thanked me fervently in the name of humanity. All were willing to go upon the witness stand and testify, so they declared. Two men helped me lift off the drunk, who had suddenly fainted, and now laid limp in my arms. (Barney was devilish heavy, too.) One called a cab, and we drove off.

It had not occurred to any of the witnesses to ask my name, although I had theirs in my note book.

"Gosh, but playin' drunk gimme one peach of a thirst!" said Barney, opening one eye when we had gone a block. "Say, that punch Pinafore give me come near puttin' me out on the level! He's got a turrible wallop."

"Oh, we'll fix that," said I. "Now, you look and act as if all your bones were broken, because a doctor's got to visit you, so that I will have his evidence."

* * *

The doctor looked serious after he had investigated Barney's condition, for the latter moaned piteously whenever any portion of his anatomy was undergoing official scrutiny. I told him just what had happened to the pa-

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tient, and he waxed wroth at such persons as "that conductor" being employed by any one.

He said he would gladly put his diagnosis in writing, and if the man died his family should be able to collect a pretty penny.

* * *

With the certificate and other memoranda in my pocket I put on a frock coat and top hat, in spite of the heat, as I wished to look imposing, and, calling upon the general superintendent of the street railway, I sent in a card which read: "Samuel Johnson Blackstone, Att'y-at-Law." The superintendent had already been informed of the matter, and he assured me earnestly that had they been able to find the conductor he would have been discharged immediately. But the fellow, evidently fearing the consequences of his act, had disappeared, leaving his car three blocks before it reached the barns. The address he had given as his home was a vacant lot in The Bronx, a man sent there had reported.

"All this is interesting to you, possibly," I said, as he finished, "but there is a more vital matter to be adjusted."

"You will have no luck suing us!" he interrupted rudely; "we beat a dozen cases a day."

"Indeed?" I answered, courteously, "but this victim of a most frightful and unwarranted assault lies at the point of death. Here is a physician's report of the internal injuries he has sustained. Also the names of witnesses. If you fight, I will beat you to a standstill, and you can depend that \$10,000 damages will be the least your company will have to pay. However, the family of this honest working man are left without support, and immediate relief is what they must procure. We are willing to settle the case for \$1,600 in cash to-day."

He looked thoughtful. "It's your best plan," I remarked, gently.

"One moment, please," he said, suddenly, and with an air of increased respect, "I wish to consult with some one." He went to the glass-enclosed telephone booth, shut the

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door and, keeping an eye upon me, he lifted the receiver from the hook.

Meanwhile I looked over the pictures which hung about his private office. Apparently he was a person of low artistic tastes, for the "Yard of Pansies," a ship with all sails set, at anchor in a quiet harbor, and other gems of which I strongly disapprove, were among his collection.

"Alas! how some waste their substance!" thought I, sadly, reflecting on my own intimate knowledge of Art. But he had opened the door.

"I wish to see this man in person," he remarked, "and if it is as you state we will give him the money, for which he signs a release of all claim upon us."

"Come with me now, then," I suggested, and we went out together.

* * *

"I'm always going to feel sorry for conductors now," observed Pinafore later, putting away his share of the street railway company's yellow backs. "They ain't got it so easy. I had the hard part of this job."

"What about me landin' on me nut?" demanded Barney, "an' the doctor really made me feel sick, tellin' all the things ailed me. 'Twas me done the most."

I merely smiled at them both. I knew whose brain had done the trick.

The Lead Dollar.

PINAFORE DANNY and I sat in the back room of Barney Gallagher's saloon on Sixth avenue. Barney was relating with disgust the story of Big Jim Tracy's rise to affluence.

"He was the cheapest crook that ever came down the pike," said Barney, "and the gang chased him out. This was last year, when you guys were over in Paris with Frank Tarbox and the Red Swede's push."

"And he's there with a bundle of loose change now?" I inquired. "What was his lay?"

"That's what makes me tired," replied Barney. "He didn't have no lay, and one day Pretty Willie from Frisco was standin' out in front of Kid McCoy's, and along comes Tracy lookin' to cadge two-bits, as usual. The mob gets to kiddin' him, an' Pretty Willie asks, 'Why don't Tracy take to robbin' the kids of the milk money and their pennies for candy?' Willie says that's the kind of a grafter Tracy is, and he ain't even liable to win out then, and Tracy says it's a swell idee, at that!"

"Such low class bungling idiots are the cause of the gradual decline of our profession," I remarked, sadly. "And did he seriously contemplate going into the infantile hold-up line?"

"He did, and he done it, too," said Barney, whose language is none too scholarly. "And he cops out a round four thousand, while good guys is up agin it' cause things is on the bum."

"Too much money," said Pinafore laughingly. "Six bucks in dimes is enough at a time for a dub like that. Has he blowed the town?"

"He's out in the bar now," answered Barney; "and

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buying beer, you bet! Them kind is satisfied with a four-dollar souse, where you and the Duke here'd buy a quart with your last five and throw the waiter the change." Barney's admiration for us is unbounded, and we merit it, for when we steal we do so like gentlemen and spend the takings royally afterward. No hiding in stuffy East Side joints, bragging of our exploits, for Pinafore and myself!

The Waldorf Roof for ours in company with our best people, the only difference between us being that our appearance is frequently even more respectable and pleasing than theirs. My gray hair and smooth face above my evening clothes give an air of distinction to our party of two, while Pinafore, the young rascal, looks like an athletic young collegian out with his governor to see what's doing.

We feel silent, listening to the loud talk out at the bar. I got up, and over the low, swinging door I took a peep at the valiant Tracy, who thieved from babies. He was waving aloft a railroad ticket. "To-morrow night me off for Frisco," he cried, lifting his stein of beer; "and I won't ride the trucks like the last time the bulls gimme the office to quit this man's burg, neither! Drink hearty, boys. It's easy come, easy go, with me! I spend my coin free, but no son of a gun kin git the best of Jim Tracy, see?"

"Here's luck!" chorused the gang of loungers, glad to drink with any lush who felt like buying. Tracy named the road and the train he was leaving on next day.

It was dull in New York for us. Bob Pinkerton and the lynx-eyed Seymour Butler were far too attentive when Pinafore and I visited the racetracks, and neither Dick Canfield nor "Honest John" Kelly had issued us a pressing invitation to bring down a live one and assist the house to make expenses. I turned around. "Pinafore!" I called softly.

He came and stood beside me. "Pipe this lobster,

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Kid," I said. "I want you to remember him. Perhaps we'll turn a trick."

"I couldn't forget that map, Duke," said Pinafore. "And now let's toddle down to Waxey's and play a little bank. What do you say?"

"Good enough," I responded. "Well, Barney, so long. Maybe you won't see us for a couple of days. We're going West." Pinafore glanced at me quickly, then he grinned understandingly.

"Well, you kin have the ridin' in dusty cars this weather," remarked Barney. "I'll drink mineral and get near the electric fan. Say, you been restin' two weeks, you know it? Pretty soft, with your kick full of centuries and takin' it easy."

"Then it's time we got busy," said I, carelessly, and we went out.

* * *

The elderly Southerner, with the flowing bow tie and a shine suit which needed pressing, sitting alone in the Pullman, fanned himself with his wide-brimmed black felt hat. He pulled (but carefully, for it wasn't a regular one—only a volunteer) at his pointed gray mustache, took up a paper and laid it down again, then sighed impatiently. He looked at the man in the opposite seat, who was watching him. "A wahm day, sah," he observed. "Ah was wishin' foh a cool julep and a breeze."

Big Jim Tracy, off for Frisco, felt in his bones that here was an old sucker ripe for trimming, and as unsuspecting a yap as one could wish to find. He hitched along to the end of his seat and cordially agreed that it was too hot for any use. He also suggested that he had a bottle in his grip, and while it wasn't Bourbon, it was mighty good rye. (The fellow was not even a judge of liquor, evidently, for Barney Gallagher's whisky is celebrated among our set as the worst in town.)

The elderly man suggested that they repair to the

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smoking compartment at the other end and sample his bottle, too. The porter, answering the bell, brought a quart of mineral water, and over a friendly highball Major Shannon, from Bowling Green, Ky., introduced himself, receiving gravely in return his companion's assurance that the latter was Henry B. Martin, contractor, of Chicago, on his way home and with money in the bank.

Later, after they had smoked and chatted about the situation in Russia and upon various topics, the major told a funny story of a euchre party down home. They got into an amiable discussion of cards, and the major declared it made him feel like playing his favorite game of euchre now, by Gad. The porter, appealed to, brought a pack of cards and put up a table.

The major said let's bet any old thing to give the thing interest, so they started at a dime a game. The major kept getting good poker hands and wished audibly that this was freezeout, but then a man wouldn't get fours, of course, if he had any use for 'em.

It was Mr. Martin who dared the major to switch to poker and see if he'd get any more hands like he'd been holding.

"I'll do it, sah," said the major, cheerfully, "and bet yo' all a dollah a hand foh all the cold hands yo' feel like dealin', sah! A Kaintuckian won't take a dare, sah!"

"Suits me!" cried Mr. Martin gayly. "We git a draw, I s'pose?"

"We do, sah," said the major, courteously sliding the pack across the table. "Discard, and draw cahds. Hush; mah year is burnin', an' with me it means Ahm goin' tuh win money. Look out foh me now."

He was a jolly soul, was the major, chuckling as he watched Mr. Martin, who, with a somewhat clumsily assumed air of awkwardness, riffled the pack and dealt. But the Major's ear had burnt in vain. He

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lost hand after hand, until Mr. Martin had stowed away \$32 of his money.

"Where's your ante?" demanded Mr. Martin playfully, and for reply the Major threw down a coin the size of a silver dollar, which fell with a dull, leaden sound. Mr. Martin laughed, as the major said, pleasantly, "Mah money's up."

"What, that?" asked Mr. Martin, derisively. "I guess that cartwheel ain't good enough for your Uncle Dudley. That's the punkest piece of queer I ever saw."

"Queer?" shouted the major, angrily. "'Tis, is it? It's good enough tuh come out of the U. S. mint, sah, that's how queer it is!"

"Do I look foolish?" demanded Mr. Martin, contemptuously, picking up the coin and dropping it again. "Wouldn't deceive a baby!" he added.

"Well, I've got \$1,400 I just made in Wall Street that says it's GOOD!" roared the major, excitedly. "I'll leave it tuh the conductah, and take his decision as final! If yo' feel spohty, yo' all covah mah money, sah, and we'll see! Ah'm a Suthen gentleman, and not used tuh havin' mah statements doubted, nor tuh bein' called a counterfeitah, sah!" He paused for breath and glared at Mr. Martin.

It was almost a shame to take the money, reflected this person, but, then, being used to prying open childish knuckles in search of easy plunder, he hailed his juicy jay as the one best bet of a good afternoon. And what luck! Didn't he have twice \$1,400, and more, cached securely inside his dollar-silk undershirt, in a chamois bag? No slick worker would slip a hand into his pockets and bring it forth with money in it, for the masquerading Mr. Martin had felt the bite of poverty for many tough years, before the milk and candy graft had laid the foundation of his present prosperity. He took no chances, and surely no one could call betting that a punk leaden dollar was but lead, taking a chance.

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"I'm with you, pal," said he promptly, and dug for his bankroll. The interested porter found the conductor, who gazed with awe at the two piles of yellowbacks, with the disreputable dollar between them. The face of the Goddess of Liberty was but a smudge, and the outer rim was dented as no decent dollar should be. It was a most woeful and ratty dollar, and the conductor smiled and so did the porter when the major had invited him to hold the stakes and decide the bet.

"Is it a good silver dollar?" repeated the conductor after Mr. Martin had clearly explained the conditions, "well, I wouldn't want to say; I ain't an expert."

"Would you take it if offered for fare?" insisted the major.

"I certainly would not, gentlemen!" replied the conductor emphatically, eyeing the dollar with disfavor.

Mr. Martin smiled a most superior smile and reached for the stakes.

"I win; there ain't no doubt of that!" he announced gleefully. He was breathing hard, too, for coin in big chunks was a new sensation, but a delightful one.

"Stop!" commanded the major, as the conductor made a move to pay off into Mr. Martin's eager hands. "I guess I cop, this time. I bet this is a good silver dollar, he bet it wasn't, and if it ain't I'll swallow it whole and ten more like it," whereupon he inserted the point of a penknife into the center of the dollar. Off came the covering of silver foil which I, "Duke" Merrill, had, by my own original process, pressed upon it until only the most careful scrutiny would reveal the fact that it was not, as it seemed a very poorly constructed counterfeit. The silver foil dulled its ring.

"You take the purse," said the conductor, drawing a long breath of wonder, "and you ought to get a medal with it, too." He gave me the money. Mr. Martin said nothing, and the conductor and porter faded away.

THE LEAD DOLLAR.

"It really wasn't you I was out for, pal," said I kindly, dropping my Southern accent, which caused "Mr. Martin" to look up in astonishment. "I expected to land a mark from Philadelphia, who'll board this sleeper at the next stop. He's got a lot of coin, and he'll fall for anything. But I've got mine, and I'm satisfied, though I didn't expect it from you. Now, here's what I'll do to give you a chance to break even."

"What?" he queried, listlessly. The blow had stunned him.

"Well, you hand back that \$32 you won from me, and I'll give you a dollar framed up as this one was, and you can trim the other chap." He came to life suddenly, produced the \$32, and I gave him a dollar, treated apparently like the first, which cheered him considerably.

"And I'll get off here, just so if the conductor should decide to butt in and get fresh I'll be absent," I continued. "By by, and good luck."

"Good-by," he said, rather forlornly. "I never thought I'd be the fall guy for such raw work as this."

Raw work! And that was this clod's tribute to my wonderful mind! I was doubly glad I had his money. I had previously described the man who would get on; big and tall, with a black mustache, wearing an imitation Panama hat, a blue serge suit and carrying a "telescope."

I enjoyed a restful sleep that night as another train took me back towards Broadway. Pinafore got in the next night, and when he had taken a tub at our rooms uptown, assumed a bathrobe and had ordered dinner served upstairs, over the 'phone, we counted up.

"It wasn't ten minutes until he butted in," said Pinafore, grinning at the thought, "and in thirty more we were in the smoke room. He was so crazy to get action that he couldn't wait. A sucker wouldn't have bit in a million years, the way he began on me, but I acted as daffy as he did, and we made the bet, all

THE LEAD DOLLAR.

right, with the new conductor, who was just starting his run, holding the coin. Tracy didn't even hold out breakfast money, Duke. He bet \$1,700; and I guess he was all in. You gave me \$2,000 to work with, so I had plenty if he'd raised it.

"It was rich to see that slob's map after the show-down, and he begins pickin' at the dollar with his knife and finally picks a hole in it, and finds she's LEAD clear through. He's put a curse on us, I guess, all right. He was hollerin' like mad when I got off with his coin. You're a wonder, Duke."

"Thanks, lad," I replied, modestly. "I hope you didn't allow your natural pride to overcome discretion and let that ass know who we are?"

Pinafore assured me that he had merely bade "Mr. Martin" adios and left him to a happy session with his thoughts.

Mr. De Shine Wins Out.

THE TENOR—Pass the bread again. Is the Coney Island Quartette stoppin' here?

THE LANDLADY—They suttently are, Mista Lickenboozer, an' they're four grand gents. What kin I help yuh to, Maizie?

MAIZIE (does a disrobing act on the bounding wire)—Is they any chanct of me gettin' some toast? A guy in a box durin' my act kep' wavin' a handkerchiff at me tuhday mat'nee an' come pretty near puttin' me on the blink fur fair. My nerves is just jumpin'.

THE LANDLADY—Susy, g'wan out an' tell the cook I said tuh make Maizie some toast. An', listen c'mere! Ef any one else wants any they kin have it. We gotta git rid of all that stale bread, an' this way they think they're gettin' a favor did 'em.

THE TENOR—Pass the bread again.z You know them four guys stole our hull act, but a knock's a boost in their case. Our bookin' speaks fur itself. Time all filled fur two weeks ahead. That's the kind of people we are.

THE BAND LEADER (in a low tone)—Good evenin', Bill; say, set between me and this dope, will you? I get so sick of hearing folks' troubles I'm losing my appetite.

CHARLIE ZILIFONE (of the Twelve Musical Zilifones)—Yes, it's awful. I get so sick of performers I could go and die, the way I feel. I was hopin' to get home Christmas, but we had three clubs 'round Noo York and that'll make out our salary, and there it is. Well, we follered Lillian Bussell on the bill on

MR. DE SHINE WINS OUT

the Poli circuit an' done great every show. Closed the show last week and was a terrible hit, though a singing act was just before us. I says to Freddie Proctor, I says, you tell your paw——

THE BAND LEADER (wearily)—Yes, yes, YES! I'm glad you're glad! Gimme a doughnut there, Susy.

THE LANDLADY—Lawsy me, don't say "doughnuts." I kin jest see Murphy & Willard. Oh, I think they're the funniest team. Did yunno Jim was onct in the circus business?

THE BUCK DANCER—Well, I see by the paper how one of them swell dames on Fifth avenoo fit with her paw because she et lunch in the parlor, an' he says she's blowed in eighty thousand a year of his dough. Gee!

THE DUTCH COMEDIAN—I wonder if they's really that much coin on earth? What d'you s'pose them people eat, now? I expect it's champagne fur breakfast and terrapin fur theirs.

THE SOUBRETTE—Them folks eat same as us. I guess I ought tuh know, too, 'cause when I was with Loo Fields didn't I have a fella whose paw had nothin' but? Only Willie was a dretful lush, I might a been livin' up among the hoi polloi now.

THE INGENUE—Yuh mean the cream de mint, Birdie!

THE PROPERTY MAN—Them uppity fairies run fur the end book. Ef I was pickin' out a gal, I'd take the kind what kin make a home fur a guy. That there dame you're talkin' about needs a lickin'.

THE LANDLADY—Oh, yes, yuh men thinks all us gells gotta do is tuh cater tuh some fella. De Shine tride them idees on me, but he didn't have no luck.

THE BUCK DANCER—Say, Miss De Shine, I seen a man outside who looks jest like your old man. He was lookin' in the front parlor winder.

THE INGENUE (in girlish confusion)—An' me

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gettin' dressed in there! 'Oh, my grief! I bet yuh anything he seen me!

THE PROPERTY MAN—It's a pipe he never took more'n one flash. She's safe. They won't nobody steal that one.

A GRUFF VOICE (from the hall)—Where is she? Lemme in, d'ye hear?

THE LANDLADY—Susy, g'wan an' throw out whoever's a makin' that row!

THE SLAVEY—Mebbe it's Mister De Shine?

THE LANDLADY—What, that old mutt? I'd like to ketch him in my house! It'd be a sick day fur him!

THE SOUBRETTE (as the door bursts open and a large, noisy party, with a bundle, appears)—It is De Shine!

MR. DE SHINE—Hey, Maggie! whadjer mean by tryin' tuh keep me out of my house?

THE LANDLADY (uneasily)—Now, Mike, don't make no scene! Can't yuh see these here ladies an' gents eatin' their supper?

MR. DE SHINE (bellowing)—I'll throw the hull bunch out! Git outa here, all of you! Whichun ain't paid their board?

THE INGENUE—Mista Johnson, ef yer a man yuh'll hit this drunken beast a wallop in the eye! Can't yuh pertect us wimmen?

THE PROPERTY MAN (been there before)—I don't want to interfere bechune man and wife.

ALL THE LADIES—Coward!

THE BUCK DANCER—I think somebody called me from the kitchen. Goodnight. (He disappears hastily.)

MR. DE SHINE—Hey, shell out your board! I'm the boss here. Take that! (He swats his wife on the ear.)

THE LANDLADY—Help! Help! Assistance! He'll kill me!

THE PROPERTY MAN (stung to action)—Hey!

MR. DE SHINE WINS OUT.

Leggo her, you loafer! Pick on a man! Hit me, you big slob! Come on, try it! (He hurls himself at the angered De Shine.) There! I'll knock the face offer you, too! (Hits him again.)

THE LANDLADY (landing on her defender with a plate of beans)—Dontchu dare tuh touch my husband! Leave the house, yuh fiend in human form! Here, Mike, did he hurt yuh?

MR. DE SHINE—Wow-wow-wow!

EVERYBODY—Come on; let's vamp!

THE PROPERTY MAN—I told you I didn't want to butt in! Oh, my nut!

Injun Billy's Blonde.

INJUN BILLY and his pard, "Old Martin," from Cripple, camped on the South Fork of Monumental Creek in the last light of a July day. They were in Thunder Mountain Mining District, Idaho, bound for the big camp of Roosevelt. The pack horses fed along the creek bank, all but Nellie, the bell mare, who hung around the fire, hoping for a bit of dough, her favorite food.

Injun Billy got out the hobbles, and, because Nellie liked to stray away from camp, he side-hobbled her, while the rest only needed to have their front feet yoked.

Martin parboiled the bacon and sliced off a chunk from the tender leg of a fawn. They had potted the infant the day before, because there wasn't a buck handy, nor a game warden either, at a point over 100 miles from a wagon road.

"Fawn is mighty good eatin'," observed Martin, when it began to sizzle. "Watch this here while I get out the bread."

"I s'pose we got to be bakin' again 'long 'bout to-morrow," said Billy, sadly. "Seems like that sour dough bread goes awful quick."

Martin searched in the "kitchen" alforjas for a loaf. He was an old prospector and refused to eat "baking powder bread." Instead he baked his own in their three Dutch ovens, using a piece of dough from the last baking as yeast. He found a calendar and stopped to look at it.

"Say, listen here!" said he. "To-morrow's the Fourth of July!"

INJUN BILLY'S BLONDE.

"Honest, is it?" asked Billy. "Don't seem like it; it's so blame cold. What'll we do 'bout it?"

"Well, I figger the camp's around eight miles up the trail, from our map," said Martin. "Let's make an early start. May be the boys'll be doing sumpin' to celebrate."

At 3 A. M. it began to snow. Injun Billy found it out because his dog awakened him trying to get under the blankets. They had thrown their tent down and were sleeping on, instead of under, it with a canvas "manta" over the blankets.

"What's the matter, Sport?" muttered Billy. "Snow!" he went on, sleepily, feeling it on his face, "and on Fourth of July."

It struck him as a joke, so he poked at Martin until the latter swore and opened his eyes. They pulled the pack cover a little further over their faces and went to sleep again. At 6 they were up, making ready to break camp. The snow was coming down fast, but the air was mild and pleasant.

"Hike!" shouted Billy, an hour later, and the outfit started. One buckskin horse was packed with canned butter, another with jams, tea and coffee. This had been Martin's thought. Luxuries would be eagerly bought in the camp. A mile up the trail they came to another outfit packing up. Together the parties proceeded, Billy on the bell mare ahead and one of the strangers at the rear of all the packs.

It was noon before they had climbed the last steep, slide-rock-covered hill, and ridden through snow-laden, burnt timber into Roosevelt. A celebration was in progress, with everybody in camp taking part. Dozens of men greeted the strangers, while others poured out of "Ernest's" tent restaurant, eager to greet a pack train from "United States." The mail carrier had just galloped in over the Bear Valley trail, from the other direction, with letters.

There was four inches of snow on the ground. In front of the Monongahela House, an imposing palace

INJUN BILLY'S BLONDE.

of canvas set on a log frame, Tonopah Smith and Buck Johnson, the camp's bad man, were snowballing each other. Tonopah was an elderly gent, and he had a souse which he proudly declared had cost him \$40. In the Olympic tent saloon a gramophone barked out "Florodora." A buxom lady named Klondike Kate was tending bar inside. The newcomers hustled to find a camping place near the creek, turned their horses out upon one side of the bare and narrow canyon and prepared by getting shaved.

There was a barber, and he had set up a painted pole in front of his tent. In seven minutes Martin sold their butter at \$3.50 a can, and the jams at as high a price, so, with cash in their pockets, they joyously indulged in a real shave. Buck came along as they emerged.

"I'm drunk and dressed up!" he chanted, "an' whenever I shout sumpin' drops!" No one paid any attention except the woman from the Texas oilfields, who screamed. She was a modest bottle blonde, with curling locks under a sombrero, a sweater and knickerbockers. The camp's collective opinion was that she had escaped from a burlesque show, but she had "popper" with her, and he had a long shotgun, so no one said much out loud.

Injun Billy saw her, and she smiled on him, for he was a lithe, dark faced youth, rather good to look at. "Howdy, lady?" said he, respectfully. "Real snowy, ain't it?"

"Ya'as, Ah agree with you," she said. Some one called Billy. It was the barkeep of Thompson's. "Pardy," said, he earnestly, "take a friend's advice. Her pap is goin' to marry that skirt to some guy or kill 'em. See? An' you can't blame him for wantin' to lose her, 'cause she sure is daffy."

Billy looked at the barkeep sourly. "He's sore on account of her talkin' to me," he thought; "that's what."

He returned to Miss Rice, who waited, seated upon

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a log. Martin was playing stud with three old pals from Salt Lake. The remaining citizens of Roosevelt were ceremoniously hauling a flag about three inches square to the top of a small pole, cheering loudly.

Thunder Mountain Brown, a lanky prospector, was very drunk. He silently stole up behind Billy and his fair charmer, the snow assisting him to a noiseless approach, with an open jackknife in one hand. Murder was not his aim. Instead, he grabbed a blonde curl unsteadily, intending to saw it from the screeching owner's head. Brave Billy leaped to his feet. With the butt of his .44 he beat Mr. Brown furiously upon the head.

"This way, fellers! To the rescue!" yelled the bad man, who was really not at all vicious, and a gallant souled little person. He was permitted to feel as tough as he liked, as long as he shot no one and spent his money. But Brown was down and out. Billy led the agitated lady away, while the gang snickered, and a brutal blanket seller snapped a camera, because the hind view of the tight-trousered lady was well worth preserving.

Billy's was a record breaking romance. Miss Rice had him roped and tied by supper time. He ate at her camp, talked to popper, who kindly showed the stricken one his .30 rifle, also his shotgun, and later she played on her mandolin in the light of the campfire. It was a little wet from melting snow around them, but with a saddle blanket spread out to sit on it wasn't bad.

Martin got to their tent in the early dawn. He had won a pocketful of gold, had the blanket seller's check for fifty and there was still money due him. Billy was awake. He confided his feelings to Martin, who laughed until he choked.

"What, that old battleaxe?" said he. "I bet she seen Dawson settled, son, an' could savvy the beach at Nome in the dark. She's bridle wise, all right, an' as fur the old man an' his gun, if he goes holdin' you up,

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"I'll make him swallow the gun!" Billy was hurt.

"That ain't right," he rebuked. "She told me herself she's just 17. She couldn't 'a' been there. And her hair! It's beautiful."

"I hope she don't run out of peroxide," said Martin, with a chuckle. "You cut her out. Listen to me, kid." Billy declined to answer.

Roosevelt was still gay on the fifth. A pack train loaded with liquor had just come in, and Roosevelt appeared to be anxious to drink the contents immediately. Billy had spent the entire day at Miss Rice's side. He had basely left Martin to cook and eat alone, hunt the horses and other duties, while he chopped wood for the blond lady. He even presented her with the last leg of the fawn. Martin had to eat bacon.

At six-thirty it was dark. Roosevelt burned candles recklessly, for soon the days would lengthen and the next train in would bring candles. Finally Billy broke away from the Rice camp, and, dreaming of his love, he got on his cayuse, which Martin had brought down from the hill, because they were to go prospecting up Cottonwood Creek next day. He rode "downtown."

It was dark, but there were lively times going on. "Doc" Pike had just been induced to come up out of the creek, in which he had been walking, because he said he wouldn't cross until he found the footlog. Several friends were rolling Doc in the trail to prevent his taking cold from being wet. It was Buck, the bad man, who organized a riding party. All the horses then in camp were saddled, and up the trail rode the crowd, yelling and shooting.

The creek zigzagged through the canyon, and one must cross several times to get from end to end. They splashed through, clattering up the banks, over down timber and in among the trees in which was the Price camp.

Buck's horse galloped over some prospector's tinware, piled by his fireplace. As the wilder element

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tore about the quieter ones got up, and looked out of their tents, protesting bitterly.

Billy was with the invaders. Suddenly he noted that the tent of the Texas lady was lighted. The shadow of a pair of stout legs, knickerbockered, was thrown on the canvas. All the horsemen saw it, and being very rowdy, they stopped, giggling, to watch. The lady inside sat down, removing her boots. She stopped, and only the upper portion of her figure showed, as she removed her hat. The lovely curling hair made Billy sigh rapturously.

She raised her arms as if weary, yawned and then—took off her hair. Off it came, that handsome blonde wig. She undid a tiny knot of rat-taily hair, pinned it to her head, reached for a garment, evidently a "nightie," and blew out the candle. Too shocked to speak Billy rode slowly back.

He was helping Martin cook breakfast at five next morning. "Say, let's go on over to Profile Creek," said he. "It's better than this. Come on, will you?"

"What you want to go for?" asked Martin, curiously. "How's blondie?"

"Quit that!" cried Billy, miserably. Then he whispered. "She wears a wig!" he said, raising a frying pan with a shaking hand.

Martin grinned. "The hull camp knowed that," said he.

New York Arabian Nights.

The Tour of Talma Dalmah.

IN Habib's kitchen in Washington street it was warm and cheerful. It was past the supper hour, and but a few persons were left in his cafe, who rattled the dice on a board, and chatter. The show people were in from a long Winter of work on the road, and Habib's favored boarders were gathered in a corner of the kitchen, to chat in friendly fashion.

Amena, the dancer, voluptuous and giggling, lolled on the big couch in a red kimono. The fact that Amena had blondined her once black hair, and that the black was growing out, but added to her picturesque appearance. Beside her sat Lalla Turquia, from Morocco, sloe-eyed, black-haired and beautiful. Lalla was weary. Three days sewing on costumes for her act, which opened in Boston next week, and feeding upon oil-soaked food and cloying sweets, had given Lalla a headache.

Abdallah Ben Hamidi, just back with his troupe of acrobats from Yucatan, was visiting with an American friend. Amena squealed coyly at the friend.

"You plees scuse me," said she, anxiously. "Oriental womans not dress mooch in house. Ver' slop."

"Once she was in my company," explained Abdallah, "fine gal, but fool to bleach hair."

"Kifhaleck!" he greeted. Fat'ma, black and laughing, put down the fork with which she stirred her cooking pots, and joyously shook Abdallah's hand. From the Nile had Fat'ma come, to the fair at Chicago in '93. Now she cooks in the cafe.

"Well, les' all have something to dreenk," said

Abdallah. "Amena, you want smoke? I bring these cigarettes from Campeche. You try." The husband of Lalla, and other Arabians and Moors joined the circle.

Yousouf, Abdul, Hassan, Edouard—from Algeria—partook of arrack, and Arabian coffee in tiny cups with a sprinkle of perfume in each. Lalla smoked the narghile, the water in the bowl bubbling furiously as she inhaled the smoke. Amena chose whiskey, with a glass of grenadine to follow. Fat'ma brought pistache nuts, and almond pastry, cut in little cubes.

In the big sink, Fat'ma washed tablecloths, showing her white teeth in a merry grin. Her running mate, a darkskinned Syrian woman, bowed her head in brief prayer.

"Catholics—ver' relig," whispered Lalla. Then the woman ate her supper, listening to the talk, while Fat'ma the washing done, washed strings of okra ready for the pot, and ladled out steaming fingers of mutton and rice, wrapped in tender grape leaves. "One day I hear of Mullah Ali," observed Habib, splitting a nut.

Amena grew interested. So did the rest, and Habib told the tale of Mullah Ali and the blonde. "Mullah Ali, he prett' smart. He have sideshows with cirque, and one day a womans comes long, gets fortune told. Mullah Ali, he is framed up for thees part; wear turban an' 'Rabian clos.' Tells womans she goin' on stage, mak beeg hit. Next day she come back, 'cause he say if pay dollare more, fin' out more.

"She give hup dollare, an' he throw the bull con strong.

"Then fin' out she ees beeg fool, but have hosban wid mooch coin. Mullah Ali go talk to George Jabor, who tak' out show one time, an' he say "Gwan, fin' out if she got mon' on the levale. If so, shaake down plent'."

"Then Mullah Ali's wife get mad, an' say no will stand for him fool round blonde womans. "Nup," she say, "you got quit." But he say he lof only her, an'

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blonde womans beeg sucker. Buy beeg fine di'mond hearrings for wife, an' that square it.

"You goin' be seenger," he say to womans. But she can't seeng, she say. Mullah Ali say, 'I feex that. You make hup for Oriental gal, do muscle dance, an' seeng in Arabic. Then peop' not know you can no seeng; theenk it Arabic seeng.'"

"Ha! Ha!" laughed Abdallah, appreciatively. "He smart!"

"But can't mak' her get next," went on Habib, "so mak' up mind what to do. Him an' Yousouf Romay goin' tak' her to Morocco, an' breeng back. Then she know plent' about country, an' be Oriental star. So she go to hosban' who name is Johnson, an' he geeve hup money. Beeg lot, too. They change name to Dalma Talmah, that sound good for twelve-sheet."

"I remember!" Edouard broke in, "an' she write 'about bein' captive in harem.'"

"Wait, I know that—don' Mullah write these t'ing?" said Habib, smiling. "They take Dalma Talmah to Morocco an' she learn quick. Go hin mosque, steal altar covare, an' get arrest. When she been in lockup t'ree days, Mullah Ali give gendarme money, an' she get out."

"Ha! Gendarme! P'leece, hey!" ejaculated Lalla, puffing at her pipe.

"They buy Moorish clos' an' Talma watch how wimmens dance, an' prett' soon Mullah Ali say ready to go home. Then he geeve her good lickin', so she can tell 'bout horrors in Sultan's harem an' describe right. She mak' holler, but he 'splain how got to do, or no can act part right.

A't las' she say that's right. So every day on ship Yousouf an' Mullah Ali give womans damn good lickin' an' teach on ship how to be Oriental. Prett' soon she get wise. When get here, Mullah Ali writes hup in German what he know an' she know an'

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she put in English tale about bein' escape from Sultan. They goin' start the show, but mus' be advertise."

"Where is husband all this time?" inquired Abdallah.

"He deeg cash," replied Habib. "Keep him busy, you bet. He's fool, too. Well, get back an' begin book show. Goin' open in Jersey City, an' go on road. Then Talma git excite, an' say mus' seeng American song, too, biffor do dance. All right. She goin' seeng 'Listen to the Band,' first.

"This show is name' 'Queen of the Desert' an' is beeg melodrama'. Ess all rehearse an' Talma pay all bills. Mullah Ali keep an' cop out hundort dollare every day or so, an' hold out. First show, she come on, an' begin seeng in tights. Ver' craze to show shape.

"She seeng, 'Oh, Listen to the Band,' an' march to musack, an' Mullah Ali an' Yousouf in weengs watch. Then what you theenk? Her tights begin bust, becos she git fat on all Arabian grub Mullah Ali feed her to mak' fat. They bust more, an' Mullah holler in German: 'Come hof! Come hof!' but she kip on march an' seeng like fool.

Peop' begins laff an' holler from front, but she pay no 'tention. Mullah rush an' grab, just as tights is mos' gone. By Allah! The show is crab, an' she have faint.

"Then Mullah Ali get so mad he lick her good an' hard. His wife come hup an' wimmens begin fight. Ees terrible bat' they have, an' put scenery on the bum. She say, Mullah Ali geeve her bad deal, but that ain't it. She's beeg frost, herself. Mullah Ali don't get more'n ten t'ousand dollare out of it, after all that troub'. She go on back to hosban'. Show open eight, close at nine 'clock. Prett' quick tour, eh?"

Cap Brown's Water Treat.

He Buys a Wagon Load, and the Copper Camp Wets Up.

THEY sell water by the ounce down in Southern Utah. The bigbugs who own the copper mines live in 'Frisco and take baths—enough in one of them to send a whole camp out on a hilarious fresh water souse. They give you whiskey to chase whiskey—it's cheaper than water.

The desert is dry, and so are the inhabitants of Pioneer, a flock of tents which stand spreadeagled about the base of Copper Hill. There are no purling little creeks rushing a-down the sandy sides of Copper, and thirty-eight measly cedars and pinons, with no roots to speak of, are the nearest approach to the thick, green timber which decent mountains should wear.

There were thirty-eight, because John Betts once wagered his new pattern Luegar and a hundred in regular money upon it against a pinto pack-horse and another hundred, the property, for the moment, of a man from Cripple. So the camp had taken a holiday one Sunday, or, maybe, a Monday—dates get mixed where you pike along at mining every day—and the official count declared Betts winner.

At the base of Copper one scraggly, disreputable old cottonwood reared its dusty green spire. The spring was there; the oneriest, no-account spring along the Arizona border. It took a week to run a coffee pot full from it. The spring was a joke.

Water came in barrels, at a dollar a barrel, down the road by freight wagon from Santa Clara, not quite so desolate, and nearer to the United States. The wrigglers didn't show the first day after the barrels hit camp, but a few hours later the man who didn't like his animal food au natural got out his strainer and

let his dipperful filter through before he took a chance.

Of course, these mining gents got money for staying at Copper Camp, and they got a lot, too. And nowhere to spend a cent except to buy money orders for home or hang around and bet it at the bank or the wheel in the "Bucket of Blood," an establishment much more peaceful than its name would indicate.

Bill MacNulty, foreman of the Humming Bird, was sitting in front of his tent re-nailing his boots. Tramping over copper float and sand wears out nails in a hurry, and Bill only had one pair.

His pard, young Sanders, from Wickenburg, was darning his socks and fixing a patch on the corduroy trousers, which needed it badly. "Carrying the chain" while surveying in the district is hard on clothes, especially as it was Mr. Sanders' habit to slide down such declivities as he came to, heedless that at evening material for a new patch must be rustled.

"I'd laugh if it would rain," observed Bill, between nailings. "Ain't it hell how a country like this can't have no water? Where kin that one-eyed dub with the freight wagon be? He's late now, and I ain't heard no bells. I was figurin' on washin' my face to-morrow."

"Why, going to a party?" asked Mr. Sanders amiably. "Don't be so wasteful. Say, what would you do if a big cake of ice came up right in front of you?"

"Holler fur help. I'd know I was foolish," said Bill, gloomily. "I ordered some oranges from that guy, too. Where kin he be?"

It grew darker on the desert. A few dark red smudges showed on either side of Copper Hill, behind which the hot sun had disappeared. Eight o'clock and no water wagon came grinding through the sand.

The camp was fretful. Men who had cheerfully dispensed with ablutions as a daily duty now developed an ever-growing desire to wash.

Chihuahua Charlie, the lookout in the Bucket of Blood, peevishly busted a hole in the top of an "air-tight" of green peas, from which he carefully poured

CAP BROWN'S WATER TREAT.

the liquid. In this he laundered his hands, for Chihuahua was a particular cuss, and he wouldn't go to work until he'd made his toilet to his own satisfaction.

"Weeping Jesus," half Navajo Injun and half Greaser, urged to effort by Bill MacNulty, was posted at the Spring, with eleven coffee pots, a tin cup and a lantern. His work was to jealously garner each unwilling drop as it oozed forth from under the big rock, still warm from the sun, to insure breakfast coffee all around.

It was old Cap Brown, from Ogden, who first noticed the lack of moon on a night when Luna should properly have been shedding her pale, pure light and making the desert beautiful. Deserts are seldom pretty, either by moon or daylight, but the folk who write about the barren wastes back in old New Hampshire sometimes say it that way.

Cap Brown had won seven dollars playing "Twenty-one" during the day, and there was that much and at least six bits more inside him in liquid form. He had on a suit of thin cotton pajamas, and all afternoon he had loafed about camp, drunk and disreputable, instead of starting on a long-planned trip across into Nevada in company with Weeping Jesus, who wanted to show Cap a galena prospect which was the real goods.

Cap had gone to bed in his tent several times, arising after a short and nightmarish snooze, filled with a burning of the "innards" and a wonder that it was not yet dark.

Now he was up and about again, conversing loudly with himself about nothing except the moon, which was not riding in the starry skies.

"I b'lieve, Brown," he said, addressing himself, "there's goin' to be a storm." With that he entered the Bucket of Blood, shielding his bloodshot eyes from the lamplight. "Gimme a drink of water. I'm sizzlin' in my stummick, and awful sick, Pete," said he to the barkeep.

The latter pointed to an empty water keg, the

cover off, with the damp bottom the only wet thing about the place. "Ain't no water till One-eye comes, Cap," he said gayly. "Guess he'll be piroutin' in before midnight. Boys been drinkin' up what soddy they was left in the bottles, too. They ain't nothin' here but plain booze, an' gin, cocktails an' creme de mint. Won't you go against 'em?"

"I'm dyin' on my feet now!" cried Cap, miserably, pressing his disturbed stomach. "I'm goin' up an' lay in the spring.

But Chihuahua Charlie stopped him.

"Ain't you heard them tales about poor miners a-dyin' of thirst on the desert, an' licking wildy at the sun-baked mud of ancient buffalo wallers?" he asked gravely. "Don't you go to absorbing all that spring now. We're liable to thank that there mudhole for savin' our lives yet."

Talk became general, and John Betts told lively instances in which dear departed friends of his had breathed their last wandering, lost, over the cruel, hot sands.

"But we ain't lost, you lobster!" expostulated Mac-Nulty. "I wish you'd quit! I'm gettin' awful thirsty myself."

"Once, over on the Colorado, I drank up two gallons of ice water on a bet," said young Sanders,, reminiscently. "It tasted so good I could have licked up another. Ice water's liable to kill you if you take too much. Doctors say so, too."

"Shut up!" exclaimed some one disgustedly. "We'll all be chokin' to death in a minute!"

Just then Weeping Jesus came out of the night. "Ees beeg storm, cyclon, blow hup!" he shrieked in tones of terror. "Come, whoop! Knock over pot, heet me wif mooch sand! Ees hell!"

A sudden wild wind swept through the shack, and as quickly died away, leaving all quiet outside.

"Dog gone you, vamoose back an' put them pots straight, and fill 'em up!" shouted Mr. Hankins, boss of

CAP BROWN'S WATER TREAT.

the Bucket of Blood. "Storm! Can't a breeze cool off this heat without you goin' off your nut complete? Have some sense, Jesus."

Jesus spoke fluently, in Greaser Spanish, and he scowled sullenly at Mr. Hankins. "You not my boss!" he growled. "I got money, mooch as you. Don't have to go." His game eye wept, because it always did. That was why the camp had so aptly named him. Captain Brown sat in a miserable, sweating heap, very, very sick.

"Jesus Marie Xavier Running Buck," said he faintly—this was the much mixed regular name of the weeping one, "You been workin' an' bummin' around on my money two years. Ef you want your breakfast to-morrer, sluff! You hear me."

Jesus considered a moment. "Ees too beeg weend!" he said plaintively. "Ees cyclon, boss. Hones'."

Cap settled back on his uncomfortable chair, groaning. "He's loco, that guy," remarked MacNulty, "We ain't had no rain for so long that"—He ceased. The sound of a shot, then two more, and shouting, came to the ears of Mr. Hankins' customers. Young Sanders did a buck dance for joy, making the stacks of chips at the stud table waggle and fall, whereat their owners cursed the dancer.

One Eye was coming! Jesus recovered his spirits instantly. Hankins became pleasant, the solo, the "vingt-un" table and the stud game stopped.

The moon was just sneaking along behind a ragged, gray-black cloud, showing whitely through in places. They crowded outside, listening to the tinkle-tankle of the bells on the eight-mule freight wagon, and at the voice of One Eye, urging them on. He was still a good half mile away, but the cool little wind brought the sounds plainly.

"Where's your storm, Jesus?" laughed John Betts. "I reckon you seen a mirage, an' at night, too!"

Every one guffawed at this sally, all but Cap. He had slid to the floor, at the end of Hankins' shiny bar, imported from St. George by freight wagon, and lay there,

holding his aching head, with no interest in anything but his own woe.

Tents emptied quickly when the occupants heard One Eye's signal shot.

The wind blew colder, all in a moment. MacNulty had opened his mouth to welcome the change from the day's stifling heat—and the cyclone struck camp. There were yells of fright and calls for help, tents went over and men were tangled in them; blankets of sand swept over them. Hankins' bar went sailing aloft, and Cap took a journey on the wind, landing in a clump of dusty sagebrush 300 yards away. A wild jangle of mule bells came to MacNulty once, as he lay prone in the sand, his toes and fingers digging in with frantic clutch. Smash! Crash! He heard the wrecking on all sides. Something fell heavily on his back, moved up to his neck, and through his thin undershirt rain seemed to be falling. He twisted his head to look, keeping his eyes almost shut for fear of the blinding sand. Weeping Jesus was slowly crying into Mac's neck. Limp and scared senseless was he, but Mac angrily shook him off. Then, all being quiet, he arose slowly and gazed on the scene. The camp was scattered over the desert. Near at hand the dreadful heehawing of One Eye's mules, very evidently still alive, came to him.

The moon came out, shining yellowly. The cyclone was over. One by one, the miners turned up. Young Sanders came along, assisting Cap, who swore he wished to die at once, and be done with it. In a body they searched for One Eye, stumbling over wreckage, and roaring to each other. They found him under various portions of his wagon, unhurt.

"I guess the bar'ls are gone, fellers," he remarked, ruefully. "We better see. Hello Weeper, that you? How you been?"

"'Ow's tings at Virgin Revaire?" asked Jesus in his turn politely, his teeth still chattering.

"Well, looks like some of this Virgin River water I

CAP BROWN'S WATER TREAT.

brung is irrigatin' the desert," and One Eye began investigating.

One barrel remained unharmed. Stray oranges, the mail sack, bags of coffee and potatoes, sides of bacon and cans of syrup were about. Carefully, they tapped the lonely barrel, each drinking sparingly, for this must last until young Sanders took one of One Eye's mules and rode to Santa Clara, on Virgin River, to order a new supply.

The camp made a joke of it all. Chihuahua set up the faro layout and the checkrack, recovered from odd spots. Hankins dug out two candles, shielding them from the mild little breeze now blowing with a paper. Chihuahua kept cases on the game, and Fatty Lyons, the slickest dealer in Utah, took his place behind the dealing box.

Cap suddenly recovered. It was decided that the cyclone had cured him. He had a yen to gamble, and bet high.

"What's the limit, Fat?" he asked.

"The sky, old pal," replied Fatty unconcernedly, and Cap dug for his bag of gold, taking his place at the king end. The others made small bets, including One Eye, who would, on occasion, stake even his mules upon the turn of a card, but Cap did the big betting. At 3 a. m. he had \$17,000 on the bank. Hankins ordered his men to close the game, as the last two cards came out of the box.

"You stung me that time, you old sinner!" he said. "But wait'll we set up housekeepin' reg'lar again. I bet I have your hide a dryin' on the roof!"

Young Sanders was five hours gone, loping over the desert to Santa Clara.

The camp went to sleep, with a forlorn coyote barking up on Copper Hill, and One Eye's thirsty mules voicing their troubles from the big cottonwood by the spring, where they were tied.

* * *

"Now, where is that old lunatic, anyway?" Hankins asked it. But no one knew aught of Cap Brown, or his

bank roll. There was no one to steal from him, and Weeping Jesus was present. That meant he had deliberately chased off somewhere by himself.

When One Eye found a four-year-old black mule missing, it seemed to answer the question. But he had left a big outfit behind, also Jesus, for whom Cap felt a queer fondness. They couldn't understand it, and the waterless camp went mournfully about the remaking of their homes.

Young Sanders got in with Pecos Billy's wagon about midnight. He was all out and sleeping on top of the barrels, after his hard ride to the river. The camp drank long and enthusiastically. Where was Cap Brown? Jesus lay in a despondent heap, his bad eye crying as usual.

Along about daybreak all the mules in camp set up a welcoming song. It was deafening. The camp got up, each armed with something to swat the disturbers.

There was Cap Brown, riding atop of a pyramid of water barrels, drawn by fourteen big Mexican mules. Jesus, bleating happily, rushed toward him, and so did the rest, many very airily clad indeed, fresh, as they were, from their beds.

"Here I am, boys! Go as far as you like with it! This drink's on me!" yelled Cap. Cheers greeted him. Willing hands unloaded the wagon, and they took a holiday. Such a plenitude of water had never been in the Wah-Wah Valley before.

They built fires of crackling sagebrush, and boiled water, just because they could. They bathed and drank, and drank and bathed. Hankins served whisky free, but no one wanted it. They were intoxicated on water.

The mules drank gratefully.

Shirts which water had never profaned were soaped and rubbed and rinsed, while gentlemen with a real aversion to washing rioted in it for once. Every man, in his turn, got in the big casks, with only his head out, yelling and splashing.

Down in the sagebrush country they still tell of Cap Brown's treat. It was a great day.

The Adventures of Clarence, the Messenger Boy.

THE fat brewer from St. Louis was in town for a day or so, and he had seen all the sights from Paul Kelly's place to Cleopatra's needle. With two friends he was taking in the burlesque show on the Bowery, and every time the chunky girl in the green tights on the end gave him the eye he stood up in the box and signalled that he was willing to buy a drink. She must have been thirsty, poor girl, because she gave him the Injun sign right back that she wouldn't do a thing to a nice cold bottle.

But when the soubrette who played a "child part" came on, with her pink clad limbs and white shoes, a ruffled baby bonnet and pink dress, it was good-night for her job-lots on the end. The fat man transferred his glances, and only hoped that she wasn't too young to be allowed to go to supper alone after the show.

The soubrette threw him a coy look, in the shyest and cutest way. He immediately prevailed on his friend, the cigar man, to cash a check, because you need a little ready cash in the kick in a big town, and he was going to show this one he was the goods.

She made a couple of funny motions to him, and he couldn't make out whether she had a stern parent in behind or wanted him to trot around to the stage door. They have burlesque shows in St. Louis, too, and the brewer wasn't going to fall for any brace game, so he doped out a cautious play.

He told the friends he'd be back, and floated out to hunt a messenger. Now, Clarence Fink, the red headed mes-

senger boy from an uptown office, had been delivering a note at the Sullivan clubhouse. He was taking a leisurely look at the pictures of ladies in tights along the line before returning to his office.

When the fat man halted him, Clarence wasn't the lad to let anything slip past, so he said he was from the Grand street office, and what did the gent want? The brewer entrusted Clarence with an invitation to supper, to be repeated to the little 'un whose name on the bills was Birdie May Nailem. When Clarence heard this he whistled shrilly, then laughed inwardly. The fat man told Clarence, as between man and man, she was a bird, too, and maybe he'd take her out of the business and kind of show her how a man from ol' Missouri treated a lady when he was there with a bundle.

"I may have a few balls under my belt, y'know," he said, "but I'm allus a gen'leman, see? Just tell her I'm the boy who keeps the waiters busy. Sort of make it strong, and you'll draw down a two-spot. You see, I'm married, and if I let you frame this up I ain't takin' any chances."

"Leave it to me," said Clarence. "I'm the best fixer youse ever run again. Wait fur me on the corner, and I'll be back wit' a report." Many a time when this particular show played the house Clarence had been in back.

Birdie May Nailem was giving her oldest son, Billy, who had hair as red as Clarence's, a few instructions as she dressed for her next part, when the latter appeared at her dressing room door.

"Now, you tell your father if he shows up with another souse on, he kin hunt a new home," she said, angrily. "And you g'wan home and tell your sister not to furgit to give baby his medicine. Whadda you want? Ain't I told you to keep away from here?" she inquired, as Clarence modestly signed that he desired speech with her.

"Say, maw," said he, with a grin, "youse got a mash! This guy's here wit' all kinds, an' says will youse have supper an' he'll buy wine? It's the mark who was settin' in a box—he says youse seen him." "Maw" laughed in a gratified manner. "I guess I can land a few if I have got

CLARENCE, THE MESSENGER BOY.

a big kid like you, Clary," she observed. "Lemme see, now."

"Con him along, maw," suggested Clarence, craftily. "I t'ink he'll stand a swell touch." "You mind your business and go back and say I'll go," replied the fond mamma of Clarence Fink, and then she added a few whispered orders.

"A private room for the supper! Great!" chuckled the fat man, when Clarence returned with the news. "I guess I've made a hit." Clarence helped him find a quiet little place, where he ordered supper for two, with plenty of fizz, then got a cab and drove back to get Birdie May.

* * *

They were getting quite chummy, and the fat man had let Birdie put on his two big diamond rings, and see how his stud looked in her shirtwaist. Suddenly the door opened, and Clarence, wildly excited, burst in upon them.

"Skiddoo!" he cried, in thrilling tones. "Hully chee! Jerome's raidin' the place! Youse'll bot, be in the papers?"

Birdie May screamed, the fat man turned white.

"My wife! I'll be ruined!" he gasped.

"I'll save youse! This way. Folly me!" commanded Clarence, grasping his arm, and the fat man, snatching his hat, didn't even stop to bid Birdie good-night. When they had gone down some back stairs, through an alley and into Second avenue, Clarence paused.

"Safe!" he said. "T'ank youse lucky stars, too! Jerome himself was wit' 'em."

"But why'd they raid it?" asked the fat man, still trembling.

"Didn't I hear her husband tellin' 'em he'd follied youse, an' to mug bot' of youse?" returned Clarence, "an' ain't that enough?"

The fat man was horrified, then. "My diamonds!" he exclaimed.

"Ef youse git outa this town wit' youse healt', youse in luck," said Clarence, impressively. "Ef youse make a

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beef, that dame's old man might croak youse. I heard the cop say he was a killer."

"I guess I'll go back home," remarked the fat man, sadly, "and let 'em go! Gosh, what a narrow escape! I hope he don't kill that poor girl."

"It's none of your funeral," said Clarence; "it'll soive her right. Why, t'anks, mister." For the fat man had pressed a ten-dollar bill upon Clarence.

"You saved my life," he said, "and if you'll see me safe on the train, I'll give you another. I've had enough of New York."

And the next day all of Birdie May Nailem's numerous family had new clothes, and mother had money in the bank.

Topeka Thompson's Educated Dice.

MESSRS. BENDER AND TWISTER, the acrobatic duo, walked up the steps of the actors' boarding house in Irving Place. Each carried a suit case. They were glad to be back in New York, after several weeks playing Western park dates, and when Bill Bender had rung the bell he did a merry little dance upon the top step. "I guess it's bad to see Fourteenth street again. Eh?" said he. "I hope we get a good room."

Susy, the slavey, opened the door. Both gentlemen greeted her with vaudevillian humor. Susy had heard their jests before, but she laughed, because Bender had given her a quarter once, and he might do so again. "I s'pose you want a room?" she remarked.

"Sure," answered Joe Twister. "Call the boss, Susy."

The slavey lifted her voice. "Oh, Mista de Shine, a coupla parties is came for rooms!" she shouted. Above a door opened and closed. Bender and Twister exchanged glances. Surely the servant had called "Mr." and not "Mrs." de Shine! A heavy foot was heard in the hall above.

"Whuzzat you say, Susy?" said a gruff voice. Susy repeated her remark, and the new boss of the place came ddownstairs. He was fat and red faced. A perpetual odor of whisky and bad cigars emanated from his person. He wore an undershirt, trousers and carpet slippers this hot night, and ran a hand through his stubby hair as he descended.

"Evenin'," he said.

"How'd do?" returned Mr. Twister affably. "We want to see Mrs. de Shine. Ain't she in? We ust to stop here, you know."

"I do the business here," replied the fat man, scowling. "I'm her husband. See? Bill de Shine, that's me. I'm runnin' the place, young fellers."

Twister and Bender conferred by signals. Bender's nods meant that they might as well take a room as go to some other place, and Twister's wink that he agreed. "Kin we get 30?" asked the latter, "if it ain't took? We allus had it."

"It's two more a week now," said Mrs. de Shine's husband. "I've raised all prices. Want it? No? Then I'll give you one of the \$6 a week rooms—top floor, back, Susy, and don't disturb me again. Collect in advance."

This was the limit of insult. Never had any vaudeville performer paid board before the next Saturday night, when his or her salary was due.

"We never paid first before," began Bill Bender, "and won't now. See? Where's Maggie, anyway? You can't throw no bluff at us. We don't owe nothin' to you or nobody, and if you want pay first from a team like us, what plays none but the best houses, why go chase yourself."

"Goes for me, too," declared his partner warmly; "you bet."

Mr. de Shine gazed at them out of two little pig-like eyes. "Oh, if you been here before," said he, propitiatingly, "it's all right. Don't get sore. Business is business, and my wife had a mob of dead ones, you see, so I had to clean up. Show 'em up, Susy."

He lumbered upstairs ahead of them, opened the door of the first floor front and went in. The pair plodded upward, with Susy in the rear. On the third floor by the dim light of a turned-down gas jet Bill Bender discerned a woman's figure. "Hello, Maggie!" said he loudly. "Give us your mitt. Who's your friend, the big noise?"

Mrs. de Shine, formerly undisputed queen of her own

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house, clasped his hand, and in a whisper implored him to hush. "Is he down in the hall?" she asked. "My soul ain't my own no more. Yes, me, the proud Maggie de Shine, I ain't no more account in my own joint than a rabbit. Gawd knows I'm glad tuh see yuh boys, but my heart is tore in two, an' that ain't no josh."

She accompanied them up the two remaining flights, and when both young men had begged her to explain she did. Mr. de Shine had arrogantly intruded one night, put the dinner guests to flight and announced that as Mrs. de Shine was his lawful, undivorced wife, and what was hers was his, he proposed to remain there and look out for his rights. She didn't know why she had yielded, but she had.

"A gell gets so tired of bein' a lone woman," she said, tearfully, "an' me havin' no one tuh advise me, I s'pose I let him stick so's he'd quit makin' a disturbance. It's been two weeks, an' he's druv out half the boarders. He plays cards with 'em an' beats 'em, an' ef they won't play he talks sumpin' dretful. He's down there with the Bingo Musical Four now, an' I jest know them boys is losin'. Don't yuh play with him, will yuh? And don't go 'way. It does me good tuh see old frens again."

Bender and Twister bade her a temporary farewell, and then discussed this strange affair. "Women don't know anything," said Mr. Bender. "I've heard her say forty times she'd belt him in the jaw if he came 'round, and look what she doe. Lets the old mutt butt in and raise the dickens."

"So he trims the gang, eh?" ruminated Mr. Twister. "He's got a sweet chance to make anything offer us, ain't he? I s'pose the grub is run by his nibs, too. Well, if it's too much on the cheeserine, we can vamp out easy, that's sure. Gim'me a cigarette."

They lay upon their bed, talking and smoking for an hour afterward before getting ready for slumber.

The Bingo Musical Four creaked up to bed. From their remarks it was apparent that they had lost at a game of poker with the boss. They went into two rooms near

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Twister and Bender, and only the dull buzz of their voices was heard.

"William!" shrilly called Mrs. de Shine at midnight, "where yuh goin'? Can't yuh take Fido out fur a walk? The dolling ain't had no air tuh-day."

"Aw, shut up!" replied Mr. de Shine's growling tones, "I ain't no poodle's nurse!"

This caused Twister and Bender, awake in their bed, which bore a mattress in which lumps and sudden distressing hollows abounded, to snicker. Fido, the poodle, was detested by every one but his devoted owner. He was a snarling, over-fed little beast, whose chief delight was in biting inoffensive persons when they endeavored to pet him. "I give him credit for not standin' for that dawg," said Bender, chuckling. Mr. Twister snored in answer. His partner rearranged his own pillow, got up to turn off the gas, and laid himself down again. All was quiet on their floor and soon he slept.

* * *

Mr. de Shine sat on the front steps in the glare of the electric street light. As each of the boarders came up the steps, home from doing their acts or supping with friends, he addressed them. "Feel like a game?" said he.

Those who feared him got around it in some way. The ones who were fully paid up sneered openly and passed in.

Minnie and Jessie McDoodle (billed as the Sisters McDoodle, champion lady rifle shots of the world) stopped to speak with him.

"Like to play a little cards, ladies?" said he.

"Oh, gee! We're goin' to bed," replied Jessie. "Got a rehearsal in the morning, an' we can't play poker any-way."

The boss invited them to tarry a moment. "I ain't crazy about poker myself," he remarked. "Hearts is a nice game, if you play for a little stake, and I'd even play casino to oblige a friend. S'posin' we have a little game of that now, just to pass the time."

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Minnie McDoodle kicked her sister gently. The latter walked in. "We ain't going to play, an' let that end it," said Jessie, distinctly. "We're paying our board, you know."

"Hoity, toity," said Mr. de Shine soothingly. "Don't need to get huffy about it, gals."

"Say, he's just awful!" exclaimed Jessie as they climbed to their room. "You can't get in or out without meeting the old villain."

As each person came in the boss met them with an invitation to a little game. In vain did the almost hysterical landlady, bearing the growling Fido in her arms, remonstrate with him. His reply was that they didn't have to play if they had no desire to do so.

"Pryor and his band" were playing a season's engagement at a beach resort near New York. Several of the members lived at Mrs. de Shine's, and of the five there four had fallen victims to the boss. But "Topeka" Thompson, one of the clarinets, had not. Many years with a circus band had taught Mr. Thompson, a sturdy son of Kansas, a great deal.

The boss had set the most alluring traps, and the wily clarinetist had merely grinned, saying that he didn't care for cards. Topeka, a long-time bachelor, daily evinced a more pronounced liking for Minnie McDoodle. He was permitted to call for a half hour's visit every night, and with Jessie as chaperon and Birdie Barrington, the vocalist, next door, it was considered quite au fait, under the circumstances. It was midnight when he got home from the beach and at least 11 when the sister team got in.

"If it wasn't for him I'd quit this old place," sighed Minnie. "Why, the meals are just awful. That must be Birdie."

Birdie, after knocking, entered. "Did he hold you up again?" she inquired. "My soul! he's the limit. A gen'-man fren of mine saw me home from playin' that club in Harlem, and old de Shine actually began on Willie. I give him a good strong call."

Birdie sat on a turned up suit case, chairs being scarce.

She had brought her manicuring utensils, and busily attended to her nails as she conversed. "Ah, me! I'm lonesome," she said. "Wait till you're married an' your old man's on the road with the big top, my dears, and you're all alone. S'posin' you harness up with Thompson, you'll have the same thing, Minnie. He'll be doin' band work an' you in vodeville. Well, show business ain't no cinch, an' yet you stick in it."

"He's coming now!" cried Minnie, her eyes sparkling. She blushed, too, for stage ladies are but human. The other two jokingly plagued Minnie about her sweetheart.

"They do say clarinets is reg'lar devils for connin' the girls," said Birdie. "Now, a good steady kettle drummer is the kind for me."

The heavy tread of two pairs of male feet went past the door. "Got a match?" asked one, for the hall was dark.

"Oh, dear, he's brought some man up to talk music with," lamented Minnie, dismally. "That's all he cares for me."

"They're all the same," replied the pessimistic Birdie, consolingly; "every one of 'em."

But Topeka tapped a moment later. "All knockin' me, eh?" said he, with a wink. "A guy's got a small chance when three get to tellin' his past. Say, I got an old pal from the Pawnee Bill show band. Lem'me bring him in? He's a real nice fellow."

Jessie gave gracious permission. The ladies hurriedly powdered their faces, arranged the folds of their kimonos—a hard-working artiste may sidestep convention in the matter of attire at times—and when Topeka's friend, Jim Allegretti, appeared they greeted him pleasantly.

"That's a queer fish, the fat guy downstairs," said he. "Tried to get us into a crap game. Last night it was cribbage."

"If my Sam was here he'd fix him," said Birdie. "Sam is dead wise to all sorts of stuff, and he'd win all the old idjut's got."

Topeka began to laugh. "'Member the guy we trimmed

TOPEKA THOMPSON'S EDUCATED DICE.

out in Anaconda?" he asked, "the one who knew it all? You see this one lets Jim win five bucks at the bank, to start us all, and we lose forty before a party tips me it's a bunk game. So we goes outside and comes back later with a roll and beat him good."

"How?" inquired Jessie, curiously.

"The old copper on and copper off," answered Mr. Allegretti. "I knew the first fellow who ever tried it, and brought it East here."

"Here's a funny gag. Just thought of it," exclaimed Topeka, pulling something out of his coat pocket. "Some guy gives our solo cornet these to-night, and he give 'em to me for a kid. They're crooked, but you can't tell it." He displayed a pair of amber dice. Birdie suggested that it might be well to use them on Mr. de Shine.

"He's a crook himself, all right," returned Topeka, thoughtfully. "I was told yesterday that he used to keep a gamblin' house somewhere, but a man got sore and shot him up once, and it scared him out of the business. If I was Maggie I'd kick him out mighty pronto."

Minnie was rolling the dice on the floor. "I made seven three times. Is that good or bad?" she asked. Topeka gravely said it depended what she was trying to make in the noble game of craps.

The entire party gayly sat upon the floor to watch Topeka operate with the amber dice. "Bet a nickel you don't seven!" cried Mr. Allegretti.

"Took!" replied Topeka, rolling the dice out. Seven resulted, at which he examined the dice closely under the light. "Here's a laugh," said he. "It's all sevens, no matter how they turn up."

At that instant a loud knock sounded. It was Mr. de Shine, more odorous than ever, after a nightcap, or several.

"Well, well!" said he jovially, while they stared at him, "having a little game, eh? I was up turning out the gas in the halls and saw the light. You see, I never go to bed till late. Any chance to get in?"

Minnie's first idea was to indignantly order the smelly

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intruder out, but she glanced at Topeka, whose face wore a beaming smile.

"You can if the girls don't mind, old pal," he said, cordially, "but just you and me. They'll look on."

Mr. Allegretti understood, and so did Birdie, who was a lady of much experience. She nudged Jessie. "Here's where he gets it good and plenty," she whispered exultingly. "I just hope Topeka stings him for all he's got."

The boss declared that if there was anything he liked it was a dice game where it was all friendly.

"How much you goin' to shoot?" he desired to know.

"Oh, shoot you a dollar," said Topeka, carelessly. "How 'bout it?"

The boss was somewhat heavy to get down upon the floor, but he squatted there finally, landing with a groan. Something rattled in his coat pocket, and the moment Mr. Allegretti heard it he showed a lively wish to get as near Mr. de Shine as possible.

The game began. They were using Topeka's dice, and in throwing for first shot he got that privilege. Mr. de Shine's hand had sought his coat pocket, and Mr. Allegretti reflected that when seated on the front steps he had worn no coat. Stealthily the hand came out, holding a handkerchief. And it held also a pair of amber dice, but this Mr. Allegretti did not know. He merely harbored a vague suspicion. And he became nervous over Topeka, for he dimly recollected hearing that two sets of dice were needed to skin people—one for the victim, with a scarcity of the useful seven, and the other for the exclusive use of the person conducting the skinning bee.

When, after Mr. de Shine was \$9 out, Topeka passed the dice over, Mr. Allegretti could not see but that the enemy had an equal chance with his friend. The ladies were greatly excited. Birdie explained it to the other two. She was also puzzled about the crooked dice. With a graceful sweep Mr. de Shine threw them out. Ace-deuce resulted, and he lost a bet, but retained the dice.

Topeka was keeping a vigilant eye on the other's hands, and so was Mr. Allegretti. Now, when the dice had been

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thrown over to the boss they had shone in the gas light. They were a clear amber and quite pretty. Mr. de Shine threw again and eleven came out. Mr. Allegretti started in surprise. The dice seemed darker and they were dull looking, although amber.

The boss won seven bets and lost the dice. "Double it?" asked Topeka. "Better make it \$2 a crack."

"G'wan," agreed the boss, producing a roll.

Then Topeka got busy. He threw sevens and elevens until the boss gasped, for each cost the latter \$2 from his big roll.

"That's passin' some, that is," said Mr. Allegretti.

"I should hope so," said Birdie, much engrossed. "Better'n my Sam could do, it really is. Another seven!"

The party unconsciously raised their voices. Twister and Bender awakened, down the hall, each draped a sheet over his pajama-clad form and sailed out to ascertain the cause of the racket. They were invited to sit on the floor and watch the combat. Bill Bender declared he'd never seen such luck as Topeka possessed. At last the dice went back to the rueful boss. And just as he crooked his hand to throw Mr. Allegretti seized it.

"Thief! Robber!" he roared, swatting the back of the boss's stick hand with his own left. "Palmin' another pair, are you, you old buzzard?"

Four amber dice fell out of the boss's hand. He aimed a blow at Mr. Allegretti, but Mr. Bender, in most unsporting manner, walloped him on the head from behind with Topeka's clarinet case. Birdie grabbed the money lying in a loose heap, while all the ladies screeched loudly, as ladies will to add to pleasurable excitement.

"He was ringin' in his own!" shouted Mr Twister indignantly. "You old snake!"

The boss got to his feet. "I'll fix you!" he yelled. "Get out my house, and get now!"

"Cheatin' people, are you?" resumed Mr. Twister, fearlessly. "I'll have you pinched, you loafer!"

A shrill yelping announced that Mrs. de Shine and

Fido were coming upstairs at a swift pace. The door burst open.

The Property Man, long the oldest boarder, bearing a revolver, was with the pale and trembling landlady, who tightly clasped her snarling, precious poodle.

"Here, what's the row?" demanded the former. "What's all this?"

Mr. de Shine dashed at the Property Man furiously. Violently his doubled fist shot out, but the latter was a handy fellow in a mixup, and he dodged instantly, and as suddenly cracked the boss's head with the revolver butt.

"He's bein' killed! Yer a-killin' my husband!" squealed Mrs. de Shine in anguish. Mr. de Shine sank into a flabby heap against the McDoodle Sisters' bed. The uproar was terrific.

"Is he dead?" queried the fallen gladiator's wife.

The Property Man spoke. "Not by a damn sight," said he, "and see here. Onct before I split you and him out, an' got smashed with a plate for takin' your part. Just now you said you'd give anything to lose him. If that brag goes, I'll kick him so far he'll never come back, but if you're four-flushin' say so, 'cause I won't stand no monkey business."

"Mista Johnson," she said earnestly, "it goes! Get him out and the bridal chamber's yours fur six a week fur life, an' it's a room I kin get fifteen fur any old time!"

Assisted by all the gentlemen, the property man laid hold of William de Shine, who opened a bleary eye and then began to sob. "You ain't got any kick," he wept. "You win a bunch of my money, an' how I dunno. Ef I'm ast for an opinion, I b'lieve your own dice was phoney. I never had no real chance to use mine, let alone switchin' 'em. Mebbe I have picked up a little change, but you're ahead. Lemme 'lone."

"He's a robber!" said Topeka. Mr. Allegretti was trying not to laugh. The shocked newcomers declared Mr. de Shine a low villain. Mrs. de Shine recovered her old-time form.

TOPEKA THOMPSON'S EDUCATED DICE.

"Yuh vamp, Bill de Shine!" she threatened. "Show that map of yer's here again and I'll have yuh locked up, sure's I'm here!"

Mr. de Shine said in that case he would go. It was a hard deal to give a man at 2 A. M., and some day she'd be sorry. The entire top floor went down stairs, watched him pack his two suit cases and depart. Topeka brilliantly suggested a supper for every one, and he would pay the bill.

With Mr. Allegretti, he went after the liquid part of the meal. The house larder was to furnish some of the food. The two returned, bearing many bottles and parcels, bought at the saloon and restaurant near by in Fourteenth street.

"Fill the glasses!" cried Topeka. "'Tain't every night we drink champagne, folks!"

"Yer the fust one that ever beat that wretch, Mista Thompson," said the landlady. "Gawd knows I drink luck tuh all yuh boys fur riddin' me of that pest."

Of the original party, none gave away the secret of the lucky amber dice.

"You see, the fellow gave me two pairs," said Topeka in a whisper to Birdie, "and I kept handin' him the dead ones."

"Ef you ain't a clip," she returned, admiringly. "My! what a night!"

The Property Man drank thirstily. Then he addressed Topeka. "I s'pose you don't feel like rentin' them dice of yourn?" he asked. "I think I could use 'em in my business."

In Habib's Kitchen.

FAT'MA, the black cook from the Nile, thoughtfully sniffed at a steaming finger-shaped piece of chopped mutton tightly wrapped in a grape leaf. The kitchen of Habib the Arabian in Washington street, was hot and close, for Fat'ma had many kettles upon the big range, in which various savory Oriental dishes were preparing.

"Prett' near done, Fat'ma?" asked Habib, the boss, "you mak' to get move on, plees—many peoples wait in cafe for dinner." He looked angry. Fat'ma laughed, and dropped the meat from her fork back into the pot. "'Scusa me, I got say my prayer to Allah," said she, demurely.

Abdallah, the acrobat, down in the Arabian quarter for a dinner among his friends, took the liberty of one well acquainted, and strolled into the kitchen from the cafe in front. "Ah, ha, I'm gettin' hungry," said he, "hal-lo, Habib what you got good to eat, hey?"

Fat'ma discreetly kept on praying. A good Mohammedan should attend to this ceremony before serving the food. And Habib, though a Catholic Arab, respected his excellent servant's feelings too much to interrupt her devotions.

Thus Fat'ma propitiated Allah, and also gained time for the mutton to finish stewing. She lengthened the prayer, with a coonful eye upon the pots.

Then, "Amen!" said she loudly, in English, because all was ready. Amena, who performs the dance du ventre at fairs and other places of entertainment, came slowly down the kitchen stairs from above. She was one of Habib's boarders. Lalla, the little whirl-

IN HABIB'S KITCHEN.

wind dancer, followed her. All gazed interestedly at Fat'ma as she lifted the contents of the pots upon platters. Lalla curled a finger about a bit of sour cheese dropped by Fat'ma in her haste. "How you been get 'long, Lalla?" asked Abdallah. "How come you ain't work now?" "She too strong to work!" put in Amena gaily; "leeve on money, eh, Lalla?"

"Oh, I ain't broke yet," replied Lalla, cheerfully, "an' I got hoosban'. That's more'n you." Even Fat'ma snickered at this retort, for Amena's faithless husband had fled with a bleached blonde in a "Streets of Cairo" show.

Yousouf the Turk put out aside the besmoked red calico curtain which divided cafe and kitchen.

"Hah! What, all in here?" said he, jovially. "Me an' George Romy was sittin' outside an' hear you talk." "Say, thees is fine," said Abdallah, "how you say, if we all eat in kitchen, lak' old times? Hey Habib?"

"Sure, go 'head," answered Habib. "Fat'ma will breeng grub. All plees set down on couch, an' have plent' room. But first peop' outside must eat." His guests crowded laughingly into places on the two wide couches in the corner opposite the range. George Romy, the Algerian camel driver, appeared and amid the squeals of both ladies squeezed in between them and ordered Habib to fetch a drink of arrack all around.

As they awaited dinner, sipping the white liquor, Habib sighed heavily. "What for you mak' such sad breath?" inquired Lalla. "Twent' year ago to-night I suffer mooch," said Habib. He was urged to say on. "My father ain't got much bankroll," began Habib, "ees poor man in Arabia. So when I'm young I go 'way to Algiers an' git place to peek grapes in grape arbor for reech man. I mak' two francs a day, an' think I'm prett' lucky. Eet is long tam ago. You lak hear how I got in the beezness?"

"Forty cent," said George Romy, in surprise. "You ain't call it mooch now, hey?" Habib smiled. It

was common talk that he had a great deal of money. "I peek, peek, in sun till am ver' tired," he continued. "One day beautiful lady come walk with womans; black lak Fat'ma. She got veil over face, but let drop leetle when see me, and show oh so sweet face."

"She mak' mash," observed Amena, "you bet!"

"Every day she walk past," said Habib, "an' one tam she smile on me, Habib, who ain't got no money, but lofe her mooch. She is Zuleika, the boss' daughter. She prett' as pict'. Well, I know I got learn mooch biffor can spik to her, becos I don't spik French, an' she don't know Arabian. I kip on save an' save my centimes, an' some time don't eat only grapes an' buy French book lak you call prim-er.

"Nother grape peeker; he help me. In four month I learn write lofe letter and say how the sun go out when she pass by an' moon is dead wan beside her, the beautiful. So I give to black womans the letter, an' then I wait.

Next day up at window I see white veil wave and wave, an' behind is Zuleika. I think it funny she don't come out, but not come.

"It get be mebbe 'bout 6 o'clock, an' man spik to me. 'You, Hab, want mak' beeg mon,' he say; 'then come 'long.' The man who row boat to ship, he ver' bad with ache in legs an' can't go. You beeg and strong row boat to-night.' I go long to dock where grapes is load in lil' boat to take to ship. Prett' soon I row hard and we soon get there with grapes.

"They holler for me to come up ladder for minute, when grapes is load on deck. They leave 'em all loose outside, not down b'low, see? and sail to next port, where boss has beeg wine mak' in place. When I'm up some beeg guy grab me, heet me in nut from behind, an' nex' I know eet's ver' dark and ship rock, rock an' mak' beeg noise.

"Peop' come keek' me, and I can't help, becos am tied. Nex' day we get to town. I never know eet's name, and that night I'm put on beegar ship and

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start for 'Merica. We get out lil' way, and sailor man takes off ropes, give me beeg drink grog and say: 'How you feel now, you lose your gal, hey? Mebbe now you think cat bet' not look at king?' Them is first English word I have ever hear.

"Fin'ly I find man who spik so I can onderstand, and he tell me this what I get for mak' lofe to boss' daughter—but t'ain't boss' daughter; eet's his wife! But I not know—it show you how all wimmens is liars, becos she con me and then give him my lofe letter, and laff. All right. I not say mooch, but think and get prett' mad, you bet. Prett' soon the captain come say to me: 'You strong feller. How you lak be sailor?' Well, I not lak, but what can do? I work my way here, and lick every man on ship, becos am strong.

"When I get here to Noo York I got four dollar, an' met Abdallah, this same Abdallah. He got beeg tumblin' act. That's how I get be best understander in acrobat beezness. But wimmens mak' always trouble. I'm prett' lucky to get out so good, I guess."

The Love of One-Arm Annie.

It was night in Chinatown. The damp, hot river breeze, mingled with the scents from a dozen kitchens wherein chop suey was frying. Inside Murphy's concert hall trade was very dull. The pianist, his shirt sleeves rolled up, his neck bared, listlessly beat out a tune. A couple of perspiring women waltzed together, swapping their troubles as they danced.

The inevitable sailors, the prop and mainstay of the concert hall, sat in a noisy bunch at one table. They had selected as the object of their combined attentions One-Arm Annie, who sat, queenlike, in the midst of her boisterous court.

The other women in the place watched her sourly. It was unjust that this crippled member of their sisterhood should have so many gentlemen to buy her drinks, while they sat alone. But Annie had taken the sailors' fancy. One of them threw her a silver dollar, jokingly.

"Tell us the story of your life for that," said he, gaily.

"Onct," she replied, obligingly, pouching the coin, "I lives in the country, see? They ain't nawtin' too good fur me in them days. But I gets a job in a factory, and then I lose me wing on the railroad, an' comes along here. They calls me One-Arm Annie, an' I been here ever since. That's all."

The sailors laughed heartily and ordered another drink. One said it was slow in there. Immediately the rest agreed that it was, and they left, with scarcely a word of farewell. Annie had amused them, and she had a dollar for it. That evened the score.

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"I t'ought mebbe youse was goin' to elope wit' one o' yer pals," taunted a flabby, pale-eyed blonde.

"I'm goin' tuh meet him at the church!" retorted Annie.

The pianist, with a grin, played a bar of the song of that name.

"Don't let 'em kid you, Annie," he called. "I don't see nobody astin' them what they'll have."

She went out into Pell street, where groups of Chinese and loafing whites stood about. A string of earnest "sightseers" trailed up the street, following a blatant guide.

The big copper greeted her amiably. "My, you're all dudied up," he said.

Annie giggled. She had on a new hat and this flattery was pleasant to hear. She spent the evening visiting the joints of the district. She still had the dollar intact at midnight, because different persons had bought her a drink and a sandwich here and there.

It was her idea of a lucky night. She had drunk, eaten and she had a dollar, and so decided to seek the little room in Mott street, where she lived with another female derelict, and go to sleep.

She had taken too many doses of bad whisky to feel lonely as she trudged along Mott street, her feet sounding hollowly on the pavement. In a doorway a man stood as she passed. The white glare of an arc light shone on his face and, passing him once, she turned to look again.

"Frank!" she gasped, stopping short. "It's him!"

In the sodden mind of One-Arm Annie there dwelt a picture, even after ten years. A little house on a street where lofty elms made it cool and dark on the porch, was in the picture. An old woman rocked contentedly, sewing at something. A slim young fellow in illcut clothes sat upon the steps, and told a girl in a white dress that just as soon as he'd made his fortune in New York he'd come back to his Annie.

So now they met again, and the picture would fade

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in the face of reality. "Hello, Annie!" he said. "Say, ain't this the limit?"

Annie felt no regret that his tone was not more tragic. Why should it be? There they were, and it couldn't be helped.

"Where youse been all this time?" she inquired calmly. "What's yer lay?"

"I was makin' good money pullin' off a poke every few days," he returned, "but the bulls won't let a guy have a chance. I gets pinched an' blows my fall money to get sprung. I ain't et for two days."

The picture intruded on Annie's mind again. A vague wonder came with it to know just how much different she seemed now than long ago. She had been sweet faced and rosy then. Now she was soiled in mind and body—but so was he.

"Ain't youse got no pals to go to?" she asked. "None of 'em sticks when you're a dead one," he said bitterly. She noted his face was very white and he trembled.

"I—I'm a dyin' for a shot!" he went on chokingly. "They got me wingin'. I ain't had none the old white stuff for two days."

"So yer agin the dope?" she said. "I used to smoke onct in a while, but I didn't never git no habit. The morphine gag's worse."

He pushed up his coat sleeve. The arm was scarred in many places from the morphine needle. "My legs is worse," he remarked.

Annie sighed. There was the dollar. It would give him relief. Food and a "shot" or two would make him happy. A tender pity was in her heart. Looking at him the squalid present was indistinct, and she saw the love of her youth.

"Here!" she said, and put the coin, warmed by her hand, into his cold one.

She began to cry forlornly.

"Say, you ain't a goin' to regret it!" he declared. "Come on wit' me."

THE LOVE OF ONE-ARM ANNIE.

She waited, fearful all the time that he would not come back, while he went into a near-by drug store. She watched him in the rear of the shop jab the "gun" into his flesh. He took three, and then rejoined her.

"You saved my life, Goldie!" he declared.

"Goldie" had been his old name for her. The gold of her hair was nearly gone now, replaced by an ugly gray. They turned into a little restaurant and ate beef stew together. He talked continually, but she was silent. The utter uselessness of wishing for what could not be sickened and frightened her. For the first time she wished to die and told him so, brokenly.

"Die?" he echoed. "I guess not! Why, you're wit' me now. I'm a good hustler when I'm right, and I know a place, now I'm fixed up, where I kin go get a piece of change to-night. Come on. You're wit' me from now on. I'll take care of you." His tone was tender.

A delightful peace enveloped her. Together they started out, One-Arm Annie and her lover of olden days. Neither saw the dirt and pitiful poverty of the other. He took her hand and pressed it. "You're wit' me," he repeated.

Annie glanced in a glass as they went by. "I got to get my hair blondined when we get money," said she.

The Way It Goes on Broadway.

THE angel had invited Madelyne to lunch, and, although she had made other plans for the day, she smiled upon him fondly and swore he was a perfect pet to think of it. In the rotunda of the Barking House, on West Thirty-ninth street, where all the show folks and sporting people stopped—if they had the price—Madelyne and the angel ran into Effie Summers and a friend of Effie's family.

The friend had asked her to lunch, and he knew Mr. de Mar, the angel. The angel fussed around in stocks, owned a stable of fancy road horses and didn't care what he did with his money. That was why Madelyne was going to lunch with him.

"Ask 'em to join us," she whispered. If Effie was there it wouldn't be so bad. The angel obeyed.

In the Barking House Restaurant were many nice mirrors. By gazing into the one set in the wall by their table Madelyne could observe the entire room. There was apparently no one else in the restaurant but the four.

They sat near a window where it was light, but down at the other end, in the half gloom, two men were having a couple of chops and a pot of tea. They used no butter on their toast, and the waiter who brought their modest meal told the barkeeper out in the grill on the Broadway side that "Terrible" Danny Reilly, the famous Western middleweight, and his pal, Wally Plimmer, the English feather, were inside.

The scrapping gentlemen were down from their training quarters at White Plains to do a little match-making. It was Mr. Plimmer who first noted the

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party by the window. "Blime, if it's not our little pal from the burlesque show," said he, closely observing the vivacious Effie, "and with some swells. I shouldn't have minded buyin' her a bit of lunch."

"She's a good feller," commented Danny, crunching dry toast as he carefully watered their tea; "a nice little gal."

"An' allus the lady," went on Mr. Plimmer, thoughtfully. "One of them blokes is a noisy bounder." He referred to the angel, who had downed a quart of champagne by himself, and was feeling very cheery.

He chucked the fair, and Titian-locked Madelyne under her fat chin, and surveyed her voluptuous figure with pride. "I bought her that jewelry," he remarked to Effie's old family friend. "She don't never need to go back to the stage if she don't wanter!"

"Quit, now!" admonished the lady, playfully. "I hope he chokes," she added in a vicious whisper to Effie, who winked sagaciously. Effie had her meal ticket where he'd feed from the hand, and she had a nice new job in a Broadway show, so she had no cause for worry.

The angel began a loud conversation with Effie's friend about how much money he blew in every day, and the market. The friend listened respectfully, because he hoped to nail his host for a certain scheme of his own. Madelyne was bored. Effie, who was small, near-sighted, and always figuring out just how she could scratch up the cash for the old home's mortgage, out of a salary already drawn ahead, was busily adding up figures on the tablecloth. The scrap gentlemen's waiter approached. He caught Madelyne's eye and displayed a note. He made a sign toward the end of the room. In the glass she saw two smooth-faced, smiling young men bowing and waving friendly hands. Note and signals were meant for Effie.

Effie's friend saw them, too, but he was a foxy boy. He supposed they were giving Effie the high sign,

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and he felt about with his foot until he thought he had found her foot. Then he kicked it, warningly. If she didn't stop flirting he'd make her wish she had. She looked up once and smiled abstractedly at him.

"I wonder what he's sore about now?" she asked herself, noting his scowl. The angel boomed away. But his eye was on Madelyne, though she didn't know it. She was sweetly grinning into the glass at her meshes. Effie's friend also noticed her and supposed she was assisting Effie at some flirtatious game. It did not occur to him to doubt the lovely Madelyne who apparently, adored her kind angel.

He kicked the foot again. The angel arose suddenly.

"Don't you dare to kick my foot again, sir!" he shouted, excitedly. "Trying to steal her, are you? Well, you have the wrong foot!"

Effie's friend had been kicking the angel's foot all the time!

Madelyne and Effie arose, Effie much bewildered and the former frightened. She might lose the angel, if he had seen her actions. But the angel thought her glances had been for his guest.

Effie's friend got mad. "Don't you dare speak to me like that, you long nosed dub." he replied, ungratefully, having eaten the angel's food. "I don't want her!"

It was then that Effie spied her old friends. She immediately waved a cordial greeting.

"Why, they've been lookin' at me an' me never knowin' it!" said she to Madelyne, while their escorts argued.

"You? Excuse me," replied Madelyne, firmly, "they're a'lookin' at me!"

The angel heard.

"Oh, you hussy!" he yelled, furiously, "takin' up with two fighters, eh? I'll fix you!"

Effie screamed and Madelyne did a fine property faint. Terrible Danny and Mr. Plummer had been watching in agitated silence. Now they acted. They

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fancied the angel was about to attack Effie. And they were not bum fighters.

"'Ere! Lie a hand on 'er, old cock, an' I'll rip yer bloomin' well open!" With these words Mr. Plimmer gallantly charged. He shot a fist like a' brick into the angel's open mouth, and with this world-known left ruined \$400 worth of skilled work by Prince Henry's own dentist.

Effie's friend endeavored to protest. "Get away, you little runt!" he cried, bravely. Little runt! Mr. Plimmer laughed joyously, and made for his victim.

"Help! Assistance! Murder!" shrieked Madelyne, forgetting she was in a swoon. Effie was having a fine time. She had borrowed fifty earlier from the friend, so she didn't care what became of him. A hand touched her arm. "I've got your coat," said Terrible Danny, softly. "Come on, before we're pinched!"

He grabbed Effie's hand and they sped down into the gloom, through the empty bar and out into the street. Four policemen were running towards the other entrance, around the corner.

Inside, Mr. Plimmer had walloped the belligerent friend. Then he discreetly took refuge under a table. The sympathetic waiter pulled the cloth further over it, just as the police came in and carted off both the angel and his guest.

"Heavens! I've lost 'em all!" wailed the lovely Madelyne, sitting up in dismay. Mr. Plimmer crawled out.

"Seein' as a fren' of mine knows a fren' of yours, my dear," said he, pleasantly, "wot sye we blow the plice? No spoofing; I'm a gent, I hope."

"Oh, then, get a cab, quick! He may come back!" cried Madelyne.

"Not while the bobby 'as him," said Mr. Plimmer. Outside they found Terrible Danny and Effie.

"Oh, bully! Let's all go driving!" said Effie, "but wasn't it fun?"

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"By Jove! I've got 'is bally at!" Mr. Plimmer was looking inside the derby hat he had hastily picked up. A hundred dollar bill was neatly laid inside the band. The angel had kept a holdout.

"He's a perfect pig!" said Madelyne, referring to this wronged man.

"A reg'lar bad 'un!" agreed Mr. Plimmer. putting the bill quietly away. He hailed two hansoms.

"Ere we are," he remarked. "I'm feeling a bit parky to-day meself."

Romance of an Acrobat and a Darning Needle.

The acrobat was puzzled. The burlesque show had been on the road two months and as yet he had still to unravel a mystery which had varied the monotony of two shows a day and commenced the first week they were out. Some person had taken charge of the acrobat's wardrobe, and where once his grip and hotel trunk held a collection of motley garments, buttonless and in constant danger of ripping still further apart, he now luxuriated in the possession of neatly darned socks, whole underwear, and well brushed clothing.

Somebody, no matter where the troupe stopped, found a means to enter his room while he was absent and clean up his belongings daily. Of course it was a woman. That was a cinch, but to ascertain her identity was another affair. No spear carrying damsel had shown any evidence of unusual interest in the good looking tumbler whose act braced the olio, and the two or three young women with whom he was on friendly terms were not of a sock darning cut. They were too busy tattling their various small jealousies, and copping out the best grub at the hotel tables, and in quarrelling over the Johnnies who once in a while managed an introduction and proffered one of the invitations to eat and drink which the burlesquer reads about but seldom meets with.

The other single men in the company doubled up, but Jimmy was rather more particular than most of his class, and he herded by himself, preferring solitude to saving money with a room mate. His mother, back West in Nebraska, kept writing him to quit the business and come home to help her raise chickens. She was sending out

ROMANCE OF ACROBAT AND NEEDLE.

300 baby fowls a day, hatched by incubators, and there was lots of money in it.

* * *

But the acrobat had run away from home at twelve to follow the circus and six years as topmounter with a bunch of tumblers, and several more merging from a shine three-a-day act to a headline turn which the burlesque managers would book at \$200 a week for him and his partner isn't good training for the simple life, and he declined to go home, but he kept promising to take a trip to the farm and stay a month just as soon as ever spring came around and the show disbanded. Meanwhile, as the show proceeded by short jumps toward Dakota and every day grew colder than the one before, the acrobat actually fretted over the unknown visitor.

He wished whoever it was would come in and be clubby, because it was lonesome sitting by a dinky little stove in the bare rooms of country hotels reading a week old New York paper by a bad light. Formerly he hadn't spent much time in his room, because it was more cheerful to dig up the gang and stand around the bar downstairs swapping lies and knocking people. But for a week, whenever it wasn't a case of sleep on the train with one's face burrowed uncomfortably in the red plush back of a day coach seat he had devoted himself to the work of finding out the sock-mender.

He did a little gumshoe work, craftily stealing down the halls, expecting to catch the unknown red-handed as he quickly unlocked the door.

* * *

The things were arranged as usual, ready for him to dress with all speed for the sprint to the station at 6 in the morning, but all his little devices failed to catch the "ghost" as he humorously called her in his own mind. He began to look over the fourteen chorus girls and the soubrette who came from Maine and sang through her nose. One was stuck on the comedian, and another

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was wedded to a policeman, while others frankly carried on their different love affairs. There was one little trick who roomed with a big blonde from the Bowery, but she didn't count for much. She had a good shape, sang fairly well, and made up nicely enough for her place in the back row, and Jimmy had never taken the pains to look her over. He supposed she had some fellow who was the candy kid in her opinion, or perhaps a husband.

Really he didn't bother about her at all. She had a cute pert nose and big black eyes, but she didn't chum around with the rest much. He had about made up his mind that the sock-mender was a girl named Dottie, who hailed from 'Frisco, and was always telling about what great places Zinkand's and the Poodle Dog were, and how a lady could get treated right out there. Now, he thought of it, this Dottie girl was always throwing the goo-goo lamp on him, and this clothes business simply showed what a foxy piece of work she was. She knew he had money and made a good living, and when the time seemed right she'd be on hand with one of those kind applause plays and win him out as a reward for her thoughtfulness.

He laughed to himself. She had a fine chance, that bleached haired skirt who'd been playing in burlesque when Rose Sydel and May Howard were new at it. He had a good mind to give her a call down and tell her to stop. It was annoying to be obliged to destroy letters from some real nice girls back in New York, who wrote every week, just so some fresh girl wouldn't be able to rubber at 'em.

He scowled at Dottie whenever she looked at him now, which made her laugh. But the laundry was done up and the clean stuff put out as usual, and when he spilled tooth powder all over the inside of his grip and figured, as he washed off his make-up one night that he must clean the blamed grip out, she had beaten him to it. Everything was carefully laid in the grip, but the powder was gone and the box rolled up in a handkerchief to keep it from spilling again.

Now he had kept an eye on Dottie from the time he left the room and sat opposite her at supper until he had seen her seated in the restaurant next the theatre after the show. So it clearly wasn't she, but who in time was it? The thing was past a joke. He got down with his overcoat still on and peered angrily under the bed. Nothing but a dirty red carpet met his view and he swore softly, hardly knowing what he had expected to find.

But he had a scheme, and he felt sure it was going to work. He got out a pair of black socks and deliberately ripped a fine big hole in the toe of one. He put both in his overcoat pocket ready for use at Fargo, where they played next day, and, grinning to himself, prepared for bed.

* * *

It happened that the blonde from the Bowery and the kid in the back row had the next room and he could hear them moving about. Then there was silence, and he snugly covered himself with blankets, his overcoat and a steamer rug, which he carried for use in the chilly hotels where the water froze in the pitcher and the snow sifted in through the windows. He was almost asleep when he heard a noise in the next room. One of those fool girls was crying, and the other was trying to soothe her. He couldn't sleep with that convulsive sobbing going on, and he wished fervently that she'd cut it out.

"I know what's the matter with you, Mabel," said the blonde's voice, "and I wouldn't make a fool o' myself over no man. Brace up an' quit!"

There were more sobs and the blonde's room-mate moaned. "Oh, I wish I were dead! And if you tell him I will be dead, see if I ain't. You wouldn't have known if you hadn't spied on me, and now you're going to tell!"

"I ain't, no such a thing!" declared the blonde vigorously.

He heard the bed shake; then the sound of a match striking. The blonde was going to throw a little light on the subject.

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"Say, listen, Mabel," she exclaimed, unaware of the thinness of the partition which separated them from the acrobat. "I ain't no tattle tale, an' I wouldn't a' got hep if I hadn't got a flash a yuh connin' the chambermaid tuh open the dor—see? And I wouldn't have hollered at yuh, only he was comin' down the hall. Honest tuh Gawd, he was. Gee! what's the use cryin', an' yuh ain't hardly spoke tuh the guy. I don't see what yuh see in him, anyway. He ain't much, goodness knows."

* * *

There was no answer. The acrobat suddenly sat up in bed and grinned foolishly in the dark. He had spotted the sock-mender at last, but the blonde needn't air her views of him so freely. He didn't see anything in her, either. Pretty tough nut, that one, too. Read the fight news and was always gassing about Britt, Nelson and O'Brien and Gans. Sounded a whole lot better for women to talk on more suitable topics. But, by George! The kid in the back row; that was a knockout. And he'd never spoken to her, except once when Props was rolling out his mat, and he had gruffly bade her get out of the way.

He wished she'd say something else, but all was still, and finally, shivering, he got under the quilts again and burrowed warmly. The girls were gone when the porter called him for breakfast in the freezing dawn, and when he hurried to the table both were leaving. He gazed at the little one interestedly, but she calmly said, "Good morning," and passed out. She was dressed in a thin-looking black skirt, with a short little Eton jacket, under which showed a white shirtwaist. Low shoes, a picture hat and a ratty looking ermine neckscarf about an inch wide completed her attire. He was cold in his big warm coat and heavy suit underneath. No wonder, when he saw her at the depot, her face looked pale and wan. The poor child would have pneumonia next.

He sought out the manager on the train and told him

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that somebody ought to make that girl wear sensible clothing in Dakota in December.

"My dear Jim," observed the latter, wearily, "it's no use trying to make a woman have sense. This kid, I understand, sends five of her eighteen a week home. She lives on the rest, and when she left New York her present outfit was the goods. Am I going to buy her a seal-skin? No, I ain't, and neither are you, I expect. She knows her game; leave her alone."

"You make me sick, Smith!" said the acrobat, fiercely; "sick: that's what!" He flung himself into the opposite seat of the smoker. The manager chuckled.

"For the Lord's sake! you ain't beginnin' to want to regulate the woes of chorus girls, and you in the show business fifteen years?" he inquired amusedly.

"You be damned!" retorted the acrobat, peevishly, and he looked out of the window. He could hear the manager snickering, and it aggravated him.

* * *

As soon as he was inside his room at the hotel in Fargo he got out the pair of black socks with the hole, and also a bottle of indelible ink. An hour before matinee time he poured the ink on the sock with the hole and laid it on top of the other. He meant to settle this affair absolutely and then buy that kid something to wear. Those poor little cold fingers sewing for him had something coming. He was as nervous as on the first night of a new trick and fussed around down in the bar, taking a drink and smoking bad Western cigarettes until time to dress for his act.

He had a part in the afterpiece, in which the chorus girls clustered around him, while he did some comedy, and this was where he would nail her. He felt certain she'd go to his room before the matinee, having seen him safely out. He hoped so, otherwise the ink would dry.

She came capering out with the rest, looking as pretty as a peach, even with all the rouge and black lines around

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her eyes. Why, she was the best looker in the troupe, if she had good clothes, and here he'd never noticed it before.

Her arms were bare, and his eyes sought her hands. Oh! The bait had worked, for even with all the powder she had plastered on the right that ink stain showed through. He looked her square in the face as she took her place in the rear of the statuesque blonde, her roommate, and gave her a friendly smile. A sudden joy seemed to illuminate her painted face, then she shut her lips and looked toward the audience. One of the girls laughed and winked at the little one, but she paid no attention to either the girl or the acrobat, who looked as handsome in his light suit as the millionaire's son with "nothing but"——

The strangest feeling had come over him. He felt a pleasant warmth spreading through his being, and the sock-mender was the cause of it. She had him going, and all in a few hours. "I'll let the bets go as they lay," he remarked softly to himself in his dressing room. "Why, when I have some of my diamonds set for her and dress her up she'll be a three time winner. And she'll cut out the tights, too. They run for Sweeney. I'll bet maw would like her, the little rascal."

She wouldn't even look up at supper, but in his room all was in order, with even the inky sock darned. He sighed happily and looked out at the swirling snow, the beginning of a Dakota blizzard.

It was great to be alive.

* * *

The train was late, for the roads were blocked, and the burlesquers warmed their hands at the big stove, peeped out once in a while into the snowy night or tried to sleep in the stuffy air. Suddenly the cold seemed to permeate the whole place as old King Winter sent his shrieking forces of icy wind against the windows.

The acrobat felt fine, but he couldn't find his "little missus," as he called her gayly now. Then she came in

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alone, her lips blue and her teeth chattering, hard as she tried to control herself. He couldn't stand any more, and just at that minute all the world might have stood by watching for all the difference it made to him. He only knew that he was a man able to shield this little creature, who thought enough of him to do things for him secretly, expecting no praise and getting none.

"Hey, kid!" he exclaimed. "This is where I throw the biggest drink of booze in old Dakota into you, you poor little chick! Get into this!" The big ulster was around her, and so was a big arm, in spite of her feeble protests and the astonished looks of the whispering girls of the company.

"This is where you and I start in and play one string, kid," he said tenderly into the depths of the big ulster, and the way the sock-mender cuddled against him made him certain he had done just the right thing for two lonesome persons.

The Further Adventures of Clarence.

CLARENCE FINK, the red-headed messenger boy, listened with an air of respectful attention as the man who owns poolrooms gave him some instructions and bade him follow them to the letter.

"S'posin' the party ain't in?" inquired Clarence.

"She'll be there," said the poolroom man, positively; "no fear. And I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a half for yourself now and another if a guy with a black mustache don't catch you handing her the note. Are you wise?"

"I'm next," said Clarence, and he winked coonily at his employer. When he had gone up in the elevator at the big apartment house and been admitted by the lady to whom the note was addressed, Clarence stood in the hall surveying the Gibson girl pictures as he waited politely for her to read the missive. "Her old man's out, an' she's makin' a date wit' anoder guy," reflected Clarence, and just then a big man with a black mustache walked out of the front room.

"I'm going now," he remarked. "Remember what I told you, and don't you dare to leave this house for three days. I'll be back in the morning."

"Yes, of course I'll do as you say," said the lady in a frightened voice. "Good-by!" My, but he was a mean man, Clarence decided. Going to stay out all night and wouldn't let his poor wife out of doors, and it served him right that the poolroom man had cut in and was going to take her out to supper. Poor woman, it was a shame! She'd have been good looking

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if she hadn't been so pale and wan looking. But she was speaking, half to herself.

"I want to go like everything," she said with a smile, "but I ought to stay here. I wonder now what you would do?"

"Aw, gwan along!" exclaimed Clarence. "Hully chee, y'r a mark tuh stick round here an' g't the worst of it!" He almost regretted his hasty advice for an instant after he had given it, as the lady looked so queerly at him. Then she laughed again.

"Well, that settles it, I'm going!" she declared gaily; "and you tell him I'll meet him at 10 o'clock and we'll have a lovely time. Here's a quarter for you."

As he went out Clarence heard her singing cheerfully. He felt glad that her sad life was going to be brightened a bit. The poolroom man wasn't much for looks, but he had money and would no doubt buy her some good grub and some wine. Clarence felt an unusual interest in the case, because he had carried many messages around town for the poolroom man, but never one to a female before. "She'll be on deck, boss," he reported.

"Gosh, I'm glad of it!" was the answer. "Wasn't that chap there? I heard him say he'd be there after a dinner, and Lord knows I don't want him to know this. He'd just about kill me." Clarence narrated the tale of the black mustached one's departure and he wouldn't be there again until morning.

"Hope not," said the poolroom man. "She's sick enough of seeing him, I guess. This won't hurt her a bit. I'd just as soon tell him at that except for the kick he'd raise. Here's your dough, kid; you're all right."

A man who could pay a dollar tip was all right, and Clarence was strong for his interests. "She's tickled," he volunteered; "said she was. She gimme a quarter."

"Oh, she's the goods, kid," said the poolroom man, happily; "if she could just cut that fellow out she'd

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be all right. He does more harm than good. All of 'em do." Clarence, supposing he referred to husbands in general, agreed, and then departed for the messenger office.

* * * * *

It was midnight, and Clarence, who should have been at home and asleep, being off duty, had been shooting craps over in a livery stable with several other messengers, and now he had resolved to seek his couch and rest. Passing a big Broadway restaurant, he stopped to gaze at the merry parties within. The windows were up and through the thin lace curtains he saw the poolroom man and the lady.

She faced the window, looking very pretty in a pale blue gown, while the poolroom man poured bubbling champagne into her glass. Clarence edged closer. "Who's little baby are you?" said the poolroom man, tenderly, and the lady reached across the table to pat his hand. It was very touching and Clarence really wished that a good spender like this guy wasn't up against it so badly, with his lady love married to a brute.

Horror of horrors! As Clarence looked, the man with the black mustache appeared, looking for a table. The poolroom man did not see him, neither did the lady. There might be murder in a minute.

"Don't you dare to leave this house," was what he had said. But Clarence had been on Broadway a good while and he hesitated but a scant moment. Pushing aside the hatboy, who tried to stop him, he rushed in and clutched the black mustached man's arm.

"Say, your house is struck by lightnin'!" he exclaimed suddenly. "They want youse to come right on out! It's burnin'!"

"Lightnin'!" cried out the victim, "Good God! But there's been no storm, boy; what on earth do you mean? Who sent you?"

"They was one there," said Clarence firmly, as he

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kept pace while the excited man hurried to the door, but just as he reached it so did the poolroom man and his companion.

"Hello, Doc, by Jove, you've caught us!" he began with a grin. "Nell wanted to hide, but I said no. It's doing her good, honest, Doc!"

Clarence looked on, aghast at his nerve. Doc, urging the hatboy to find his Panama, seemed but little disturbed by the sight of the poolroom man, but he wildly stated that his house was on fire. Clarence pulled at the poolroom man's coat.

"Hully chee, nawtin' doin', his house ain't hoit," he said, sadly. "I was tryin' tuh make him sidestep youse an' his wife, an' I butts in wit' this song; but youse went and killed it y'rself. I done my best."

And when the family doctor could stop laughing at his fair patient, who had disobeyed orders, to sup with her husband, he said Clarence was a slick kid and handed him a quarter for luck. But Clarence felt pretty cheap.

Mrs. Jimmy Goes Camping.

THE Jimmy de Forrests were going to rough it in the wilderness, far from the eye of civilized man. That was how Mrs. Jimmy, big eyed and earnest, explained it to her father-in-law, the colonel. The latter had made his pile out in the hills of Nevada, in the days when Pioche was the big camp, and prospectors scornfully passed over the desert where Tonopah now turns out its annual millions in gold. The colonel still dabbled a bit in mining, and once in a while he took a trip West, just to get away from pavements and evening clothes, and eat bacon and "sour dough" bread along the trail with some old cronies.

Mrs. Jimmy said they'd go to the Adirondacks, and when the colonel laughed unkindly, and asked if that was her wilderness, she said, with spirit, that lots of the very best people went, and it was as rough as anything.

"And you must come," she announced. "You're to show us how to do, and we'll live just like they do on the trail, and all that. Won't it be sweet?"

"Where you goin' to get a cook, my dear?" inquired the colonel, who was practical.

"We'll cook ourselves, that's the fun of it, don't you see?" she replied, and when the colonel urged her to at least take along his Japanese valet, who could do all sorts of things with a few pots and pans and the most ordinary articles of food, she said Yashami couldn't go a step.

So the colonel sighed, and gave in, and from that night the ten-room apartment on Riverside Drive lost its peaceful air. Books on camp equipment, blankets, new-fangled cooking sets made of aluminum, etc., filled every chair not in active service, while the boxes arriving, filled with rough clothing for Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy, littered the whole

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place. The colonel fled to the theatres, his clubs and the restaurants, returning only when all was still except for the steady buzz of talk from Mrs. Jimmy's boudoir, where she and her husband argued over the advantages of different styles of air mattresses.

Several times the colonel offered a little advice as to what they should take, but Mrs. Jimmy silenced him. She showed him the lists which the up-to-date explorers now took to Labrador and Mackenzie's Land, and also what a friend of Jimmy's said he would take the next time he invaded the fever district in the dank, hot jungles of Yucatan.

"But why 100 dozen cans of tomatoes, and 3 quarts of citric acid, my pet?" asked the puzzled colonel.

"They prevent scurvy," said Mrs. Jimmy firmly, "and may save our lives." The colonel left the room suddenly. They heard him cackling merrily to himself from the library, and Mrs. Jimmy was hurt. "I guess he'll be glad some time, if those tomatoes should save a whole camp," she said in injured tones. "Didn't he say himself that if people prepared properly they wouldn't suffer hardship afterward?"

"Certainly, dear," returned her husband. "Your lists are perfect, because I showed them to Lord Gardner, who's been up the Nile in a what d'ye call it—and he said they were bully, and you must be awf'ly clever."

"I'm no fool," said Mrs. Jimmy with a pleased air. "I wonder if you camp in a dahabeah, isn't that what they are? I must ask him to dinner, or something."

* * *

After a busy month of preparation, Mrs. Jimmy at last announced that all was ready, and that in two days they would "break camp," for she only conversed in proper wilderness language now, and scorned ordinary phrases. The colonel had not permitted her to buy him a single article for use during their sojourn in the woods. Nor had he, as far as Mrs. Jimmy could learn from his uncommunicative valet, purchased so much as a grain of

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quinine to ward off possible attacks of chills. She had three pounds of it, however, so at least he should not suffer on that account.

"Now, my dear, I'm an old man, and have my own ways," said the colonel, politely, when she begged him to at least say what he'd like to eat in camp. "I'll eat what you've got, and the plainer the better. You and Jim will throw away about half of that trash you've got packed up, too," he added, disgustedly.

"Trash!" Mrs. Jimmy gazed at him pityingly. How little did he know of the practical devices for comfort, suggested by a hundred clerks who had never been further from home than Jersey City, which those boxes and bags contained! "But we leave to-morrow, and you haven't even had a trunk packed," she persisted.

"What time is it?" asked the colonel, suddenly. "If you insist, my dear, I'll get ready now, and then, for God's sake, let me smoke!"

He rose moodily, and disappeared. She heard him opening drawers and a trunk in his room, and much relieved, rushed off to look for the twentieth time at the cookstove, which folded up when one wanted to carry it. She hadn't forgotten a thing. She was so tired from the work of gadding all over town after the stuff that she could hardly keep on, but it was to be a season of delicious rest, just to lazy around under the trees and watch the little cloudlets floating in the sky, and all that.

The colonel's door opened, and he came down the hall to the window where she stood looking out on the Hudson.

"I'm ready," he remarked. "Let's go for a drive. Come on; it'll do you good."

But Mrs. Jimmy wanted to see what he was going to take. She said she just knew he hadn't put in his lovely woolly slippers she made for him Christmas, or his pin-cushion. A neat roll of canvas, which turned out to be a small "A" tent, lay by the colonel's bed. On top of it were two well-filled canvas "navy" bags, and a suit case.

"My blankets," said the colonel, pointing to one bag.

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"Sweaters, old trousers and a light hunting suit. Small stuff in the other. One good suit and two shirts in the bag, in case we go somewhere. Frying pans and coffee pot are inside the tent roll."

"Frying pans!" gasped Mrs. Jimmy. "Oh, father! It's cruel of you! Haven't I got three sets of lovely aluminum dishes, and everything, and a compartment 'family' tent, for all of us?"

"Heavens, my love!" exclaimed the colonel, impatiently. "I wouldn't sleep in a damn fool thing like that. I've told you I'd go. Well, I'm going, but I camp by myself. I'll come and see you, but I ain't going to be in any such cluttered up place as you'll have with six train loads of new-fangled truck."

"You're just as mean as you can be!" Mrs. Jimmy was crying. "After all my wo-ork, and I'm nearly dead—maybe I will die, and you'll be sorry—and you go and act like a hermit."

"Rot!" cried the colonel, unkindly. "Go to bed and get a rest, child. You're played out."

When his son came home the colonel had a little chat with him. "You make her get a cook," he advised. "She's crazy. All women are. What's she know about cooking on a campfire? Wait'll she runs around trying to get away from the smoke, and the bread burns up. By the way, how about bread?"

"Bake it in improved folding ovens," answered the younger man. "Fellow down in the shop showed us how. It's a cinch. I'm going to help, you know."

"Well, if you get in bad, come over to my camp and I'll guarantee you a meal, anyway," chuckled the colonel.

"I can see their finish," he said to Yashami, the valet, as the latter rubbed hair tonic into his master's bald spot that night. "And you do as I tell you. There's a town about fifteen miles from this place, and I want you to get a room there. She'll have plenty in two days, so you be ready. You'll be a cook 'stead of a valet, and it won't hurt you a bit. That is, if you want me to take you when I go to Japan in August," and the colonel winked slyly

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at his servitor. The latter agreed to accept the humbler office of cook, to please the colonel, whereat the old gentleman grinned cheerfully.

* * *

The Jimmy de Forrests had 900 pounds of excess baggage, for Mrs. Jimmy said it must go when they did, and not by freight. Fortunately, money was no object to these young persons, or the expedition might have ended before it began. In price, a trip to Europe was a trifle compared to the tips it was costing them to see their precious camp outfit safely stowed away in the baggage car.

The colonel, his meagre luggage quickly checked, was snugly ensconced in the smoker, and he only emerged when the train reached Westport, on Lake Champlain. They were to drive fifteen miles to a spot which a friend of Jimmy's had found while hunting during the previous Autumn.

The outfit followed in several wagons, while the colonel, when he stepped off the station platform, mounted a fine black horse, which, held by a boy, was saddled, and evidently in waiting for him. "I'm a Western man, my pet," he said, as he rode up to where Mrs. Jimmy, in an anguished voice, was calling to a teamster not to drop the boxes of canned goods on the folding lanterns and the medicine chest. "And I always ride. So I had this very good animal shipped up here, and the man says there's plenty of feed around our camp. May I ask what's in that crate on the top?"

"Firewood, of course," replied Mrs. Jimmy. "In the dearest little bundles, and only 8 cents each. Didn't you say how beastly it was to make camp on the trail in the rain, and not find a stick of dry kindling?"

"Very likely, I presume I did," said the colonel, hastily, turning away his face. He did that all the time now, Mrs. Jimmy thought resentfully, and it was most annoying to have him giggling in that absurd fashion. She wished she'd thought of horses, after the two-seated affair, which a farmer's boy drove, began jolting unpleasantly, especially as the colonel cantered along so easily.

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At the camp, one good-hearted teamster offered to stay and cook supper, but Mrs. Jimmy wouldn't hear of it, so the wagons, emptied, rattled back to the village.

The colonel had his little tent, fastened, by a rope run under the top, to two trees, up in no time. Four pegs, one at each corner, were all he used, and to see him rustling a supply of dead limbs, and a bucket of water, was great. He leveled off the ground inside his tent, spread his tarpaulin down, laid his blankets inside, rolled up an empty canvas bag and the shooting suit for a pillow, and there was a bed fit for any man.

He was hungry, so, from a good sized box one wagon had carried out came a side of bacon, a bag of flour, baking powder, salt, a can of peaches, and one of milk. Then a can of butter, and various small things.

The colonel mixed his baking powder bread in the top of his flour bag, with a practised hand, shortened it with bacon grease, and set it in a frying pan to bake in the heat of his fire. He didn't even look toward the camp, some 100 yards away, but he couldn't help hearing the sounds of distress.

When one "bannock" was done, the colonel had another ready to bake. Could he intend to eat two of those enormous buns? And he made a big pot of coffee, snickering to himself as he set it to keep warm beside the first loaf of bread. When all was done, he covered his grub neatly with a piece of canvas, and started for the next camp. The family compartment tent had just fallen for the third time, burying the Jimmy de Forrests. The colonel helped them out from under it. His son, unashamed, was cursing bitterly, while Mrs. Jimmy sternly held back her tears.

"It's no worse than that stove you bought, that won't stand up!" she said, spitefully. "The man said two could put this up. NO ONE can put up your stove."

"Come on over and eat with me, kids," interrupted the colonel, "and I'll help you set camp afterward. Grub's all ready."

Protesting that she had intended to get dinner for every one, Mrs. Jimmy gladly accepted.

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"Really," observed young Mr. de Forrest, his mouth full of bacon and bannock, "I never ate anything so good! Father, how on earth did you do all this so quickly?" The colonel, for answer, dug out a luscious hunk of canned corned beef, put some mustard on it with a stick, and gallantly offered it to Mrs. Jimmy.

"Easy, when you know how," said he. "I could have brought fresh meat, but feel like this. Wonder how the game is round here?"

Mrs. Jimmy, in her imported French hunting costume, which, without corsets, was too tight, rose with an effort from the ground, on which she had been seated.

"Say, ain't you got a sweater?" asked the colonel, anxiously. "You'll bust in that thing! Why, you don't wear corsets roughing it!" And then Mrs. Jimmy leaned against a tree, mashed her nose against it, and wailed dismally. "I wish I were home!" she sobbed. "It's just work, work, work! I can't find anything, and they broke the lantern, and here it's nearly dark!"

"Let her sleep in my bed to-night, Jim," whispered the colonel. "I'll help you frame up your camp." But Mrs. Jimmy stopped weeping, and swore she'd help, too, corsets or not. But when the mosquitoes began their buzzing, it was in vain that the colonel pointed out the pretty sunset, and that here would be a moon.

The big tent was a horrible failure. Every time they stationed Mrs. Jimmy under it, with orders to "Hold that pole steady," while they fixed the two longest ones, just at the critical moment a mosquito would sting her tear-stained face, her pole would wobble, and down it came.

"If you'll only go away, my dear," expostulated the colonel, "we can do it. You're only hindering us!"

Then Jimmy told his parent not to be a brute to the poor little thing, and Mrs. Jimmy said all right, she'd go home if she wasn't any use, and start right now, too. After they had soothed her, the work went on, and the colonel, in the deepening gloom, dropped his glasses and stepped on them.

Oh, how he swore! Mrs. Jimmy stopped her ears and

prayed that an outraged Providence would not punish him for such awful conduct.

But at last the tent was up, and Mrs. Jimmy, exhausted, lay under it. She didn't even care how red her nose was, or that her hair was mussed. When this lady, whose complexion and costumes made the watchers in Hyde Park, during a church parade in the season, stare, could feel such indifference, life had lost its charms indeed.

"Come on, now, and I only hope she don't come out," said the colonel, dragging his son toward the mounds of boxes and crates which were scattered from the lake to the camp.

"Now, you always want to have your grub at hand, ready for a quick breakfast," he began. "Just think, if you had to rat around in this mess! Take you a day. What you want for breakfast? Bring my lantern here. Cuss it, light the candle, you blamed ninny! It's inside. Say, ain't you ever seen a lantern?"

"I thought you turned 'em on, or something," answered his son, fumbling at the colonel's square miner's lantern. "Gosh, it's going to be some work, this affair."

"Bah!" snorted the colonel. "Heave most of this plunder in the lake, and it won't be. Are these your dishes? Where's the knives and forks?" A groan came from inside the tent, then Mrs. Jimmy staggered out. "They're on our bed, back in New York," she said, hopelessly. "I meant to put 'em in the shirt box!"

"Well, well; only need a knife and fork apiece. Don't have a fit. I've got some," said the colonel, briskly. "Go to sleep in that nice little tent of mine. You'll feel like a fighting cock to-morrow. Put on a sweater, and the skirt of that thing you've got on, and burn up that tight coat. You want to feel free; see?"

"Yes, I will. I wish I were dead," said Mrs. Jimmy dully, as she tripped over a log and fell headlong. "Leave me alone!" she cried wildly, when her husband essayed to pick her up. Then she fled to the little tent. The colonel said nothing. He knew when to remain silent.

MRS. JIMMY GOES CAMPING.

It was a beautiful morning. The colonel had been fishing from a rock, and he had four fine fish on a forked branch, stripped of its bark, when he came over to where the Jimmy de Forrests were running aimlessly about. Mrs. Jimmy had a pile of heavy corduroy clothing, Klondike sleeping bags, bags of beans, split peas, oatmeal, etc., stacked up. With a hammer she alternately rained blows on the fingers of her left hand and a box she was endeavoring to open by driving the nails further in.

"I bought a thousand kinds of food," she remarked, "and I can't even find 'em. But they're here. Oh, here's the bacon now, and the evaporated potatoes and dessicated eggs. We'll have 'em for breakfast."

"Do you mean to say, in a place where any farmer'll bring you a load of fresh potatoes, some yap has sold you these?" asked the colonel, kicking at the square tin of evaporated potatoes. "Why, you have to soak 'em six hours before cooking, and then when boiled they're mush. And the canned eggs! We call 'em desecrated eggs out West."

"The Arctic explorers take 'em," said Mrs. Jimmy, stiffly. "Then let's have beans!"

"Ten hours to cook on slow fire. Very liable to burn," said the colonel. "You'll have to put a stick of wood into that sheet-iron stove every five minutes, too, you know. How about the bread?"

"The book says how," replied Mrs. Jimmy, who had decided to keep her temper if it killed her. "I'll begin now!"

The colonel wigwagged his son to join him behind the big tent. "Everything she's got takes about six hours to cook," he said. "Now, you listen to me. You arrange with a farmer to bring you bread every other day, and pies and cakes when you want 'em. He'll be tickled to death to sell to you. Also green vegetables and fruit, milk and butter. Go over to Westport, buy an ordinary cookstove, set it up, and you're fixed. Stop! I'm not done. Where a wagon can come, you can have anything. The stuff you've got here is for camping along trails,

where the grub's sacked and carried by packhorse. You'll lose about one thousand dollars, but you'll be living like a white man. Might as well begin to get wise first as last. Use those sleeping bags for mattresses. Have a man come and build a floor in that tent. Then ship half of that Winter clothing back home. Want it all soggy from damp?"

"Oh, Lord, I guess I'll go with it," sighed Jimmy, gloomily, as he looked at their outfit. "Seems useless to try to do anything with all that mess."

"Leave it to me?" asked the colonel. "Yes? Then I'll cook these fish with some bacon, make some bannocks, and you and Nell take some crackers and canned meat, and stay away till night."

The colonel, on the black horse, which had browsed happily in the meadow near by all night, made a trip to town. Two wagons lumbered after him when he returned, and in one was Yashami, the valet, in knickerbockers and flannel shirt, a table, cookstove and a cargo of vegetables, eggs, bread and some planks.

By 5 o'clock no one would have known the place. "Blessed if the blamed thing don't look like the picture in one of her ladyship's camp books," laughed the colonel, and Yashami and the teamsters admiringly said it was a mighty fine house. There was a floor to the tent, and on it heavy canvas. The air mattresses, blown up, occupied the "sleeping rooms," which, with their partitions of sheeting, made the colonel grunt disdainfully. The air pillows and the blankets were in their places. Under a small tent Yashami's kitchen gods were neatly arranged, and a big cookstove, with pipe which issued forth from the side, in the place of honor. Mrs. Jimmy's cute eighteen-inch folding table went back to town with surplus "conveniences," her elephant gun, and the machetes and were nippers, which her cousin Stewart who had been on Shafter's staff in Cuba, had recommended for use in the jungle.

The colonel didn't want her breaking down some land-owner's barbed wire fences.

The beans, hardtack, 100 pounds of dried fruit, the

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folding stove, the ice axes, pack saddles and cinch ropes, the combined ice box and chifftonier, recommended by a lady clerk as a most novel convenience, went to one teamster's barn, to be disposed of later, when the colonel got to it. Three trunkfuls of various things, which had cost little Mrs. Jimmy many a blinding headache, were tagged and sent to storage in New York.

Yashami said he wouldn't have the patent steam cooker around, nor half of the aluminum follals in the dishes line. He also condemned the "Little Alice" ("the hunter's pet," the book called it) commonsense cookstove, useful when only a pot of coffee needed cooking ("small, compact, a constant delight," said the book).

Then, one teamster, a champion fisherman, picked out a few Jock Scotts and silver doctors, and said the rest of the seven hundred lovely flies were dead ones in Adirondack waters. Six of the fancy silver mounted, double jointed rods went with them, and some one hundred pounds of ammunition, and still there was a plentiful supply left for the young De Forrests to fret over.

"Now, vamoose, boys, and fix it all up. Here's \$10 apiece; you've earned it," said the colonel, at last. "Don't forget the bread and all that, three times a week, and fetch over the mail. I'll ride over your way. Yashami, we'll all have a farewell drink."

"That's great stuff!" said the big teamster, as he downed his whisky. "And you know your way about, sir!"

"Been around a little in my time," said the colonel.

* * *

When the Jimmy de Forrests, hungry and berry stained of mouth and hands, came near their camp, Mrs. Jimmy wanted to drown herself before facing that awful ordeal again, but Jimmy knew the colonel and he urged her on.

There was the colonel in a red sweater, old trousers and moccasins, reading The Sunday Telegraph as he lay at full length on the ground, while from Yashami's domain pleasant odors were borne to the hungry.

MRS. JIMMY GOES CAMPING.

"Father!" shouted Mrs. Jimmy, rushing upon the prostrate colonel. "Oh, you dear, dear, darling! How—where, oh, it's too much!" She knelt beside the fairy godfather and burrowed her pretty, sunburnt face in his white whiskers, while the colonel grinned like a pleased chessy cat. "Guess dinner's ready," he said, after Mrs. Jimmy had given him a hearty hug. "And if you kids will wash your dirty paws we'll eat. Here's Yashami."

"T'ank you, missus, ready in a minute," remarked Yashami, politely, as he looked out. "You have a nice walk, yes?"

The happy family sat down to supper, and Mrs. Jimmy was not heard to express one regret that they hadn't allowed her to cook it, or that her excess baggage had disappeared. She didn't ask where it was gone, and only hoped inwardly it wouldn't turn up again.

"Ain't that a pretty sunset? Better'n last night, I do believe," said the colonel later, as they sat on a log by the lake shore. Jimmy winked at his father. "Bully," he agreed.

Mrs. Jimmy only heaved a long sigh, and patted the colonel's hand. Yashami, quite at home, was reading the war news in the light of the mended folding lantern, dabbing at the mosquitoes. Mrs. Jimmy didn't even brush them away. She said she liked 'em, because they sounded cheerful.

The Weeping Greaser's Revenge.

WEeping Jesus was feeling fine. His left eye had ceased to drip with its usual annoying regularity, and he had money. Forty dollars Mexican and four American gold eagles made a pleasant clinking in the pockets of his overalls. And he was drunk! Could any-half Navajo and half Greaser human ask for more?

The full name of the joyous one was Jesus Marie Romero. The prefix "Weeping" was due to an affected tear duct. The name, though picturesque, was not regarded in his set as irreligious.

He was filled with such an overwhelming love for all races and all men that he threw his knife into a clump of sagebrush as he caroled a merry lay and ploughed through the alkali sand of the desert. From the banks of the Rio Virgin, fifty miles away, the weeping one had ridden with a freighter carrying supplies to the latest copper and gold camp in Southern Utah.

The freighter had explained, as he stood treat with two "airtight" of tomatoes and a canteen of water, that water was a mighty scarce article at the new camp. "They're givin' up the dough like I never see it, an' I been freightin' in Arizona, where we wouldn't drink ef a bar'l didn't have a menagerie in it," said he with a grin. "But, do tell! Well, inventions is great medicine. They laid fifty miles of pipe line from the Virgin."

"My! Ees beeg, long way!" said Weeping Jesus, with his good eye bulging and the bad one trying to. "Cost mooch, eh? How they do dat?"

THE WEEPING GREASER'S REVENGE.

"Them engineers from the East kin do anything," said the freighter, winding his blacksnake whip dextrously over the mules until it cut the hide of the loafing black in the middle of his team of twelve. All the little bells on the leaders tinkled as the lazy mule jumped ahead and started up the rest. Weeping Jesus hung on tightly and ruminated. "Where you say is dees camp?" he inquired later. "Once I prospect wid Cap Brown over that away."

"Doggonedest place you ever see," answered the freighter. "'Tain't near nothin'. Let o' sandhills, an' a driedup creek bed. But they're workin', sinkin' shafts two hundert feet. Experts say they'll have six million of ore in sight in a month ef they git water. Bigger'n Tomopah. It's east of Hurricane Ledge. You know them little hills."

Weeping Jesus was talking Navajo to himself. Then he changed. "Madre Dios, caliente!" he burst out, holding his sticky undershirt away from his sweaty chest.

"Yo tambien," sighed the freighter. "She's a scorcher." Weeping Jesus began to chuckle.

"I'm goin' do sumpin' damn good fur that beeg camp," said he. "I know where water is near—not need pipes. I been dere."

"Oh, you're full o' booze again," and the freighter laughed cheerfully. "Smoke up!"

His guest was silent. Later he climbed into the back of the wagon, on top of a load which contained anything from a collapsible house to a saddle blanket. He pretended to go to sleep. His good eye had spotted a demijohn of whisky. Further along, as the wagon creaked through a little group of trees by an alkali spring, the guest dropped off, and the demijohn went with him.

It was early dawn when Weeping Jesus hoofed it into camp. The stud dealer at the Chicago House—an enormous tent—was just going to bed. Prospectors, laborers who were working at timbering in tun-

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nels below the earth, in the lava formation, and all the busy men of a mining camp were stirring. Long tables in a tent restaurant had crowds eating breakfast about them, as the Chinese waiters hustled around with the grub. Weeping Jesus had quaffed deeply of the filched liquor before catching it for future reference in a clump of cactus before making his entry into camp.

There was excitement among the pioneers. Strange are the ways of fate. Weeping Jesus, full of booze and loving kindness, had hit Copper Camp three hours after seven Greasers had been chased out of it for putting halters on equine property, the property of others. Angered citizens had held a meeting and decided that no Greaser should pitch his tent and set up housekeeping for ten miles around.

While Weeping Jesus felt very friendly, it must be said that appearances were against him. He was a tough proposition, judging by looks. His oily black hair hung in dark twists around his face, which had never been beautiful. He wore no suspenders, simply hitching up the overalls when necessary. On his feet were moccasins.

"Hey, boys! Run the hoss theif out of camp! Here's another Greaser rustler!" This was how they greeted him.

"Lemme lone!" protested the startled weeper. "I got money. Want to leeve in beeg camp. Show you heap beeg water. No need buy pipe line. You savvy when I show you."

The man with the biggest mine, who consequently needed the most water, produced a gun.

"Vamoose!" he roared. He was a mean looking, red faced man, and he had lost two hundred at the bank in the night, which made him meaner. Other men roared.

Weeping Jesus felt his eye crying like everything again from rage. And he had thrown away his knife,

trusting these creatures, who warned away those who came with good feeling toward all.

"You kip on gettin' wat' by pipe. I kip secret now," he yelled defiantly. "I'm goin' an' you be feel prett' bad, too."

To the eastward green grass grew, and the wide Colorado of the West flowed. He found the whisky and lugged it with him over the desert. He slept under some dusty sagebrush a few hours later, removing his boots. A friendly scorpion crawled in one and stung Weeping Jesus on the big toe. After that he became vicious toward all things.

At "the crossing of the fathers" on the Colorado he met Billy-Jump-When-Cougar-Comes, coming from the Navajo country with a little outfit. He fed the wanderer, and Weeping Jesus told him his woes. Also that in a certain spot, covered now by six feet of desert sand and rock, there was a spring. It fed a sunken river, such as abound in Utah. If one dug it out and worked on it soon there would be water in plenty, for the Weeper's Navajo father had told him how, little by little, the great spring of olden days, being off the traveled trails, had filled.

The Navajo with the long name was smart, and he had money. Failing to get the location from Weeping Jesus, he made an offer. He was educated, and as slick as any white man. They talked business for a long time.

Three months later a small gentleman in nifty red silk shirt, wide bottomed velvet trousers and large diamonds about his person, rode his fine cayuse to the edge of Copper Pond. Out of the desert bubbled the spring which never ceased. The Water Supply Company had a monopoly. Every mine around paid them high prices for water. The man with the biggest property had come up to make a futile kick. He declared he was paying more than others.

"It seems to me I've seen you somewhere," said he, observing the small Greaser closely.

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Weeping Jesus pretended to yawn. "I reckon," said he; "I come geeve you plent' water one time, an' you pull gun. Now, pay price, or mebbe we not geeve you any."

The mine owner gasped. Memory was calling. "We chased you out of camp!" he exclaimed. "By Gosh! Now I remember!"

Weeping Jesus curled his lip in scorn. "I guess I go take bath in my lake," he observed. "Good day."

The Sultan's Troupe.

THE cool river wind came in through the window of Habib's big kitchen in Washington street. A party was being given for Amena, the dancer from Algiers, and her husband, Edouard, the juggler. All present were show people but Fatima, the black cook from the Nile, and Habib, the host. He kept the cafe in front, where Arabs and Syrians were dining upon native dishes.

"First, we want get little dreenk," said George Romay, the camel driver. "All have dreenk wid me."

"You mus' mak' win at shoot the craps," bantered Yousouf, the Turk.

"I ain't lose none," replied George, gaily. "One time las' week I get so far behind I t'ink I lose Holy Moses, but throw seven t'ree, eight time, an' now got 'nother camel name Tedore Roosavelt. He's beeg fine wan, too. Fat'ma, breeng arrack to all." Habib brought a tray of sweets and coffee, in tiny cups. When the smiling Fat'ma had brought liquor, with a dish of green watercress and raw tomato, to take away the bite of it, Hassen, Abdallah Ben Hamidi and his son Charlie; Zarah, the Persian whirling dancer, and Lalla Turquoi, from Morocco, disposed themselves upon two wide settees. Lalla dreamily smoked her favorite narghile, the rest partook of Abdallah's offered cigarettes.

"You goin' have Holy Moses at Dreamland?" inquired Amena, from her rocker by the sink. "You bet," replied George Romay. "I was beeg success last year Dreamland. They ver glad have me back."

"You got good camel, I mus' say," observed Zarah.

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"I ain' ride on camel since I leave my fadder Khosrul's nakhil" (palm orchard).

"That ain't long 'go replied Yousouf gallantly. "Street car is more easy as camel, anyhow. Fat'ma, breeng match, plees."

Anxious for a compliment upon her own beauty, Amena spoke coquettishly. "I'm gettin' be ol' woman, myself," said she, lowering her black lashes, "pretty soon; mebbe get too fat to dance. How you make ans' to that?"

"No ans' to mak'," said Abdallah, cruelly, "All wimmens get old some times, Amena. You ain't mak' you look young, by bleach your hair yella. Ver' foolish." Amena pouted. "I got plenty peop' lak me, an' ain't think I'm ver' old, jus' the same!" she retorted. Habib fetched a plate of pistache nuts. "Amena is fine gal," said he, warmly. "Have lots fellas 'round want get to know when with my troupe."

"That troupe you take out las' year?" asked Hassen grinning. "I hear all about that. How you come out, eh?" Then Habib told this tale: "Biffor I get this place, I ain' got mooch money," said he. "I got with tumblin' act with circus, an' show bust up. It leave me with 'bout forty dollar, way out in Chicog. Ees Winter time, an' beeg top shows don't start out till Spreeng again. An' I got to eat. Amena an' Edouard is long with me, an' Sokari Family, Japanese acrobats.

"We git lil flat an' I buy for all, but we got beeg ap' an' li'l to eat. That ain' no good way to be. So I look 'round an' frame up scheme. We start a show our own self. See? It's called 'the Sultan of Morocco's Own Acrobatic Troupe, direct from Theatre Royale, with twent' high-class act.' We got lil top-mounter an, two Germans, fat 'nough to look lak Orientals. They do rassling 'bout an' open show, then work with me an' kid in tumblin' act.

"I'm oldest understander in the beezness, an' we get up good turn. Nex', Amena an' her muscle dance,

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then Edouard juggle, an' two gals from museum who seeng an' dance a little, so I hire them."

"Who books the show?" asked Yousouf, practically.

"Eet don't need to be book," answered Habib.

"Tain't that kind of show. Ef eet's advertise, peop' fin' out where I am, an' that I don' want. We go long, play all li'l burgs where they don' know nothing. Get in town, hire hall an' me'n Edouard meex up two pails of paste, tak' the brush 'long an' bill the show. By night everybody know, an' we get a pack house. Charge feefty an' seventy-five cents."

"Amena say you have moving pitch," put in Lalla. "How 'bout them?"

"We got pitch in the bills, that's all," said Habib.

"Wait. First thing Edouard finds where good theatre piano player is an' breeng him to me. I'm willing pay you high,' I say. 'Give you seven dollar play my show to-night. You only got play soft for jugglin,' Midway for Oriental dance for lady an, two songs for sister team. When eet's all dark for moving pitch, you kip on play soft an' low for five minute, while drop is getting read'. See?"

"Course, he tickle to death. By Allah! Sometime I got turn away so won't laff. Show begins at eight. Edouard knows plent' Eenglish, so he tend to railroad tick'. an' fin' out when train goes. The show begin with me on door in my mak' up of Arabian tak' the tick'.

"The train leaves about 9 o'clock—mebbe later. When acts is all done we all wash up queeck, get out by stage door in alley one by one, an' go to deppo. Nobody left but Edouard an' sister team at 9. He go out an' mak' li'l speech when gals is done.

"Ladies an' gelman,' he say, 'kip your seats, plees. The house goin' be dark five minutes biffor moving pitcher. The piano player goin' entertain you. Don't stop play,' he say to fella at piano, an' he begins play loud. Sister team beats it to deppo in mak'-up, in hack we hire, with Edouard. They ain' no stage

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hands, an' I cop all coin out of box office, becos we don't split no per cent,—jus' pay fifteen dollar for hall.

Piano, fella still playin' lak fun an' peop' waitin' for the rest of twent' turns. We get train, ride to nex' place an' get fine beeg sleep biffor give next show. In the spreeng I come back an' buy cafe an' still got money in bank. Any man can get 'long here eef he know 'nough."

The Noodle's Flat.

Mr. and Mrs. Noodle had lived in hotels for a long time. They got along very nicely, but they couldn't save any money. Noodle belonged to a couple of clubs, bought a drink when any one else did, and if he saw a nifty shirt at \$9, with a sweetly nobby monogram branded on the sleeve, he didn't ask the clerk to show him one for \$1.50.

Nellie Noodle was an actress, whenever she could get a part in a show which played only on Broadway. She simply would not fall for the one night stand gag, and anyway, Noodle didn't want her to go so far away from his side. He was a crafty man of much experience in circles when folks stay up late, and he knew that too many had been lost in just that way. Nellie took breakfast in bed if she felt tired, otherwise she repaired to a Broadway restaurant, met some of the mob, and cheerfully began the day by pleasant converse.

And one day she heard about Mazie Mulligatawny's flat. Mazie declared that at last when Summer came that long, hard wait between engagements for the earnest show gell, she could look at Mister Hot Weather and smile. And why? Because she now kept house in a flat and saved money. To demonstrate, her saving propensities she let Nellie settle for the food they were having in exchange for the info on the flat question.

"I have four lovely rooms and bath," said Mazie, "and oh, my dear, the comfort of having enough room to turn around in! And only \$40 a month!" Now, \$40 a month is mighty small money, as any one will

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tell you. The extravagant, reckless Noodles paid \$30 a week in a hotel for two rooms and bath. It is easily seen that Mazie got a whole month for ten more than they paid for a week.

Nellie asked further particulars. Mazie explained that she had a darling little icebox and loads of milk and eggs and fruit, and as for little bites, with a bottle of beer at night and breakfast arrayed comfortably in thin garments, life was a delicious dream. Nellie Noodle sighed. Whenever she wanted a pitcher of ice water she had to tip the boy for bringing it, and you know you don't get much in a restaurant portion of fruit.

"Are—are there other flats in the house, my dear?" she asked. Nellie had an idea. I'll give you one chance to guess what it was.

Next day it was very hot in town, but a woman who has her mind made up cares little for weather. And by night seven hundred persons had been confidentially informed that Ned and Nellie Noodle were going to live in a flat. Nellie rented a flat in the house where Mazie dwelt so happily. There were no \$40 flats left, because the front ones were \$65, but that was only \$25 more, and see what they would save!

Ned Noodle was an agent for a whisky house, and before long he had asked all his friends if his little wife wasn't a wonder, because she was going to make a regular home for her old man, and cook and all that, and just enjoy herself? The Noodles moved. They paid deposits on gas, electric light, mineral water bottles, and, of course, the rent in advance. They bought furniture, and the moment they were in the place found the usual amount of necessary articles had been forgotten. In the basement of the house was a little tailor shop, and the owner should press Ned's clothes.

After spending \$30 in tips and a week at switching their effects, the Noodles were all fixed. The first night they had time to notice things a fearful, all-

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enveloping odor of cooking onions came up the dumb-waiter. It was a scent so robust that it wouldn't be kept out, and it settled down for a long visit in corners of the bathroom, which was a dark, mysterious little box, looking upon the air shaft, so named because there never was any air in it, and in the folds of the portieres. When the scent had made itself at home two men called to ask the Noodles out to dine.

They went. Passing out the front door—this was a very flatty flat, and there was no elevator—they found the janitor's cute little German children, with twenty-two little friends, all smuttified and soiled of clothing, wedged upon the steps. The tailor's family sat there also, because they lived in the basement and had a right to sit on their own steps. It was just what Mazie had said, "So homelike," and one's view merely depended upon early associations.

The milkman came every morning at 6 A. M. If the milk was left to ride up and down on the dumb-waiter—which wasn't very dumb, at that, because it squeaked and creaked like a lost soul when it made trips—it turned sour or the woman on the first floor, a thrifty soul, copped the cream from the top of the bottle. So Ned had to get up and take it, and no sooner was he snoozing again than the whistle sounded and the baker's man sent up the rolls.

They gave the janitor fifty cents a week to grab the whole bunch, including the ice, and keep it in his icebox. He was a man whose only aim was to please, and he kept so much of it that there was hardly any use in annoying the Noodles by sending the remnants up at all. Then, on some days he went out before 9 o'clock, and the angry Noodles rang and cussed (yes, both of them!) and cussed and rang, and when he got back at 11 they got their stuff.

Nellie found that it was quite possible to cook anything in the world in a flat. But it had to be bought first, and then cooked and served. And after that

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one washed the dishes. There was no room for a servant, because there wasn't enough for Ned and Nellie.

They lost all track of how much it cost to live as they were doing. It cost all they had, so what use to keep count of it? They had been there four weeks and two days. By the most wonderful management Nellie had held out \$65 for the second month's rent.

It was 6 o'clock. She was cooking a dinner, red-faced, tired and hating everything, including herself. Ned was grouchy chopping ice and shooing flies away. They were eating at home because Ned had just scraped up the money to pay back to his best friend a loan which he had negotiated so they could buy furniture. He had 70 cents left, and so it was better to stay home.

Once the pair had been merry and care-free, welcoming the dinner hour. Now they detested it. The bell rang. It was an old pal, Bill Dobbs, manager of the musical comedy in which Nellie had been playing when she met Ned. Bill told his past in three minutes. He had money, and lots of it, made from a chain of ten-cent theatres. He laughed when he saw Nellie. The Noodles and Bill sat on the sofa, and the former poured out their unhappy tale.

"Quit!" said Bill. But they couldn't. It takes money to move.

"When's the rent up?" asked Bill. It was up the next day. "What's that infernal smell?" he went on interestingly. It was only a mess of spaghetti which Nellie had worked over an hour, cracking finely in the kitchen and sending forth a black cloud of smoke. Bill dashed out, shed his coat and grabbed the saucepan.

"Aw, come on out and feed!" he exclaimed. "Here, borrow from me—take \$500. Pay it back in 1920. I'll help you pack tonight."

The Noodles gazed at him hopelessly. "Don't be

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a couple of mutts," he added. You ain't the kind to keep house, see?"

Late that night the Noodles and their savior were still packing. At 8 A. M. a van took the furniture away, and a porter from their old hotel came after the trunks. The Noodles, sleepy but contented, rode joyously away in a cab. That night Bill took Ned out and staked him to play the bank. They won out a roll. The Noodles were again able to live in the Bright Light District like the rest of their set.

They don't care if they never save any money.

Out With the Big Top.

THE Cook & Whitby Two-Ring Circus was in Texas. No high-heeled, bragging border desperado had anything on some of the versatile gentlemen who traveled, in one capacity or another, under the banner of the circus. "Cook & Whitby" was not the real title of Dunham's circus. It was only the grafters' pet name for it.

They were playing a night stand at Burning Lake when a rube became peevish simply because Long Johnny had gracefully separated him from the money just received for permitting Johnson's paint to be advertised on the roof of his cow barn.

"Was it me fault the old geezer can't get Joe Hep to which shell the pea's under?" asked Johnny, of the "Gov'nor," when Mr. Dunham personally inquired as to how much the rube had been shaken down for.

"Is he still beefin'?" asked Frisco Billy, the ticket seller. "It's a kindness to trim them babies. They shouldn't ought to be let out without a guardeen. I seen a feller lynched down through here, when I was with Myrtle Peak's old show."

"I hope they ain't doin' none that playful stringin' now," observed Johnny, humorously. "I'm darn perti'ler about my collars." He drew his thin alpaca coat closely about himself, displaying the outline of a 44 in a hip pocket. "I'm there any time they git funny," he said, seriously.

Long Johnny's wife was with the show. She was a voluptuous brunette, and to see her merrily sliding along, flashing smiles to every side, upon the slack wire was an inspiring sight. She doubled later with the, Giggoletti Family, swinging from her trapeze across to Sammy Jones' stand and catching Sammy's

feet. He wasn't a regular Giggoletti either, and they did say that he thought pretty well of Mabel, who was Mrs. Long Johnny.

Sammy resembled Johnny somewhat. Both had small shiny black mustaches and were slim and strong, only Johnny was the toughest. Mabel herself didn't object to trimming a live one when the chance occurred, but Sammy didn't know it, and what he didn't know couldn't hurt him.

Long Johnny met his wife in the cook tent, where she was putting away an extraordinary amount of corned beef and cabbage.

"Listen here," he exclaimed, as he thrust a bag of clinking silver and gold into her hand. "They's a pinch liable to come off—see? I may blow quick, so plant that in your kick. Just as well to be ready fur these sheriff guys. They're a panhandlin' outfit, an' the less I got the less they git. Don't worry."

"I ain't a' goin' to," replied his wife, calmly. "You're over seven."

After her second turn, as she dropped to the ground from the net, Sammy took his bow and looked at her sadly,

"Prepare fur bad news, dear heart," he said, anxiously. "Sumpin's come off. Don't you go faintin' or none o' them gags, will you?"

"Gosh, no!" answered the fair Mabel, fretfully. "Holler it out! I s'pose he's been fourflushin' around with that gun of his, an' been took to the calaboose. Let him stick. Ain't it an elegant house to-night?"

Sammy gazed upon his divinity adoringly. She might seem a little tarnished to others, but she was his star.

"You're the game gal," he remarked. "Some skirts'd be wailin' an' bawlin'."

"Well, I'm draggin' in my little old thirty-five an' cakes, an' buyin' my own wardrobe. He don't do nothin' much fur me, an' I just wisht he'd have to stay in Texas forever!"

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Mabel was plainly aggrieved.

"Don't wish nothin' so fierce as that," and Sammy shuddered.

Long Johnny, they ascertained, was still at liberty, because he had discreetly made a getaway, after slicing the top from a deputy sheriff's ear with his knife. There had been a big mix-up and now many of the law's minions were after Johnny.

Sammy escorted Mabel to the cars, across the damp lot, through a muddy clay road, and up a slippery path to where the train lights showed. All about the cars was bustle and life

"Hold up your hands!"

A big gun pointed right for Sammy's palpitating heart. It was held by a beetle-browed Texan with a lantern.

"I want you, Mister Man," he announced grimly. "We'll take the worth of that ear out'n your hide."

Sammy swore by all the gods of ancient Rome that he was but a lowly acrobat, who had never taken an ear which wasn't his in all his career.

Mabel asked haughtily if the stern party wasn't ashamed to scare a poor boy, and if he couldn't be a gent and take a lady's word?

"I'm from Missouri," said the deputy. "Show me! If your an acrobat, prove it!"

Sammy's legs were wobbling from fright, because he was too young to die way down in Texas.

"I'll do a twister and a row of flips, or swaller that there gun," he said, earnestly.

The sheriff held the lantern aloft, and Mabel held up her skirts—almost as high.

Sammy suddenly stooped, waved his long legs in the air and in a minute he had done a row of flips forward. He did a row backwards, then a "nip-up," ending with an "Arab."

"Am I there?" he inquired, proudly, landing right side up by the sheriff.

"Aw, vamos to the car; you ain't the man!" cried

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the sheriff, impressed, but naturally grouchy.

He ran into Chicago Frank next, the magician, who operated a side show and ate fire. Mabel and Sammy lingered near, in the friendly darkness.

The magician's hands went up, and the sheriff demanded information as to his identity. By the lantern's rays Frank performed a portion of his act. He was somewhat nervous, with the gun in such unpleasant proximity, but he found coins on the sheriff, and quite excited the simple man.

"Watch this coin!" Frank ordered, palming a dollar in the hand he held up. The sheriff obeyed, fascinated. Frank's free hand had brushed his patron's vest for a brief instant.

"Tain't you, neither," the sheriff declared, gloomily; g'wan. You're safe."

They didn't get Long Johnny. It was a little crowded under the Governor's berth, but Johnny was an old stager and he didn't kick. The train moved out. Sammy and Mabel paused by the Governor's berth, in the half-darkness. There was the sound of a kiss.

Johnny, underneath, reached out a hand, which gripped Mabel's ankle. He yanked viciously at her stocking, bringing away his own store of money securely cached there by his wife. Then he came out, rather grimy and sweaty, but calm. "Beat it!" he said contemptuously. "You kin have her."

But the craven Sammy had basely deserted her, coward that he was. Chicago Frank hurled himself into this domestic tangle.

"Don't cry, Mabel," he urged. "You'n John'll make it up. Here's sumpin' fur you. I saved it."

Mabel, stifling her sobs, feebly, but interestedly, inquired what it was.

"That onery sheriff's watch," said Frank.

Mabel ceased to weep. "Didn't you get nothin' fur yourself?" she asked.

"Oh, I got his roll," replied Frank. "Good night."

A Woman of the Hills.

FROM the trail below the yellow pines came the bawl of a mule, protesting as he strained upward under a heavy pack of ore samples. Tim Dawson's wife looked up from her cooking, rubbing her eyes, which smarted from the campfire's thick smoke. "Is that you, paw?" she called, in a high, thin voice.

"Hike! Git 'long, you hellians! Bite 'em, Scotty! Keep'm in that trail!" roared a male voice, but not in reply to her. A dog barked excitedly in answer. It was the collie herding the pack train into line. The beans were bubbling in their bucket, but the danger of burning, after three hours of keeping up a fire, was too great for Flora Dawson to leave them for even a moment. She put a hand upon her flat bosom, as if to support her tired voice.

"Tim! Oh, Tim!" she shouted, but the voice broke into a sob. "He hearn me, the scalawag!" she said, resentfully. "Been prospectin' two weeks, an' ain't a-goin' to even say howdy till the mules is fixed. I had a right not to fix nothin' to eat."

The animals were thrashing around in the brush now. They had halted, and Tim was taking their packs off. In five minutes he appeared. "Hello, ol' woman!" he said. "Howdy!"

"I'm good 'nough!" said his wife, snappily. She turned away, that he should not see her eyes, hungering, like a dog's, for a word of love.

"The hell you say!" he replied, flippantly. "Well, rustle grub. I ain't et since mornin', an' the trail from Injun Lake ain't no feather bed. Got any meat?"

"Bacon," she said, shortly.

He stared at her ferociously. "I leave you a hull deer,"

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he began, "an' you got none left. Been feedin' some your friends from Wyomin'? 'Scuse me, I didn't know but what you'd callers, Mis' Dawson. Where's them brats?"

"The chillen is a-huntin' huckleberries," she said, stirring the beans, "an' they ain't brats. Quit a-callin' 'em so. As fur the deer meat, we used some, an' a cougar come in camp one night an' carried off the rest."

"An' you couldn't stir a step to throw a shot into him?" he inquired. "Jest let him do as he felt like? It's a pity you"—— He ceased, because she was half kneeling in the ashes, her eyes streaming. "Snivellin' again!" he commented, and turned back to the mules.

She got up, her shoulders shaking.

"'Tain't no use; none at all," she whispered. "He's come back worse'n he went away. Why, I can't help the chillen eatin' the meat. I can't help nothin'. Oh, I can't go on livin' like a hawg no longer, clear off'n the hills like this, an' jest a-sweatin' blood. A'sweatin' blood!" she repeated; "just a-sweatin' blood. I wouldn't a-keered if I had a cookstove."

There was a shack near by which Dawson and his partner the Red Swede, had built six months before, when the gold rush had been on into Northern Idaho. The pair had taken up claims and laid out a townsite, exulting that they were first on the ground, and when the tenderfeet arrived they expected to clean a financial harvest that would beat digging in the hills. But the rush passed on, locating in the "big camp" ten miles up the creek, and the partners, instead of selling space in "Dawson City" for cabins, were broke. Two weeks later not a prospector was left in the "big camp." They had all gone on fifty miles, trailing a rumor of richer values ahead, as is a prospector's way.

Dawson had sold his little general store back in a small town, and, having no money after buying an outfit, the family had been brought along, over a hundred miles of mountain trail, into a land of rocks and barrenness. The two little boys had ridden on the same pinto pony. The girl, behind her mother. The money gone, they settled

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down to live where they had lit. The Red Swede got cold feet and struck off in the wake of the rush.

Dawson prospected, and with no success. He rode to the camp further on and found it a rich man's country. Machinery there was none to work the low grade ore; hence wages were low, because few men were needed. His meagre supply of grub ran out, and with no money to pay the high camp prices, he returned to his family. After that he made brief trips, carrying a store of provisions. They had plenty for a long time yet.

His wife tended the four sore-backed mules he had left behind. Each day she tramped miles after them, as they wandered further up the canyon searching for feed. If they lost the mules they could never get away. Returning, she drove them into a rope corral, cleaned their various wounds, and let them go again. The children must be taught. Her tiny store of old novels and thumbled spelling books was all she had. From these she laboriously instructed her unruly class, which had no desire to learn.

Three times a day she cooked. The oldest boy lugged in dead branches, but she dared not trust him with the ax, for fear he would break the handle or dull the blade, and axes were precious. So she felled trees and chopped them into fire wood.

Her hands were grained with dust, her feet bare—as were the children's, to save the shoes for winter—scratched and swollen. The swarming, persistent gnats had left red marks on her face and neck under the little knot of faded light brown hair. Tim Dawson's wife was not beautiful, and she was dying of cancer. The pure air and water of the hills could not help it. Dawson knew it, and that there was a chance to save her. Money only would do it.

In his way he loved her. But the sight of her misery aroused a wild railing against Fate inside him, and instead of soothing words he hid his ache behind a terrifying gruffness. It was his idea that should he display any weakness the woman would give up and die at once. He

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had brought \$20 back, earned by doing location work for a man met on the trail.

As the sun's last cold rays—it was nearing October—struck the pines the children came quarrelling down the hillside. They brought up at the fire, one whining, while the other two shrilly trumpeted their version of a recent affray. One kicked the bean pail over. With a knifelike stab in her pain wrenched back, the mother got up, slapped the girl furiously, and hysterically bade the boys get away. They engaged in instant warfare.

"Oh, QUIT!" cried the woman, crying weakly. "My God! here I got a worse fit'n ever, an' yuh a-drivin' me crazy!! Washin' in two quart buckets all day long to-day, an' choppin' wood, AN' cookin', an' them—them damned mules!" She breathed hard, while the children looked, mouths open.

Dawson walked up to the group.

"That ain't no fit way to talk," he reproved; "no way, that ain't. The idee of a decent woman cursin'."

Defiantly she glared at him. The pale sun rays showed the sickly white of her face, under the grime of a long day's toil. "Mebbe yuh say I ain't decent?" she demanded, clenching one bony fist against her breast. "Why don't yuh? Yuh might's well."

"Oh, HELL!" he exclaimed, and snatched up the pan of smoking bacon she had placed on a log where the heat from the coals beneath would fry it. He shook the bacon about, muttering to himself.

"Say, pop, didn't you bring us nothin'?" cried the little girl.

"No," said her father, "I didn't. Hain't got no money for to buy truck. Here! Go wash your face 'fore you come t' supper. You young uns act like you was pigs."

His own hands were hard and soiled, his flannel shirt sweaty and discolored, but something told him that his children should at least go through one of the ceremonies of civilized life.

"You're a-keepin' 'em like woodrats," he remarked.

The family sat down to eat at a rude, homemade table.

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They fed like animals, the woman eating for the mere feel of temporary warmth and well-being, and not because she wanted it; the children snatching, with greasy fingers, at the hot bannocks she had baked. Their parents did not speak to each other. Dawson had intended throwing his money into his wife's lap with a cheery word. Instead, he had snarled at her, and now regretted it, but would not admit it. He had made a record trip, riding forty-five miles over summits covered with slide rock, and this woman didn't even consider how tired he was. He forgot that he had told her nothing about it.

His wife, carefully scraping up the last bit of bacon grease with a chunk of soggy "baking powder" bread, was thinking bitterly of a life spent at drudgery for a man who cared nothing for her. Above them, the noble hills reared upward, their sides dressed in the dark green of pine and spruce. The air was cool with the healthy coldness of a high altitude. Yet they got no good from it, nor from living close to nature. Their sordid, hard working lives had no idle moments to waste in contemplation of the things about them. At night they slept, huddled together in the shack, with no ventilation and no desire for any, in the true fashion of the pioneer.

The next day they arose early. Dawson's wife had added to her other ills by spikin' her foot on a bare rock. Every time she set the foot down it throbbed until her ears sang. Dawson went off up the creek to look for a deer. He brooded over his fancied wrongs. His wife had not spoken to him that day, and he decided that he owned the meanest children on earth.

"Onery brats they be!" he said aloud. "Take after her."

His kind knew but one life, that of never ending toil, relieved at intervals by a prolonged drunk, during which he forgot many things. And now the wish to drink came over him again.

"'Tain't right," he ruminated, putting down his rifle as he rested on a ledge of rock. "Nothin's right. I don't git no thanks for worryin' my hide off. I'm goin' out to Warren, an' see the boys on this here money. I'm a'goin'

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to-night!" And he went while the rest slept.

A few days later Mrs. Dawson sat beside the creek, laboriously washing out the last pair of trousers owned by the biggest boy. He was capering about, clad in a motley assortment of garments while his wardrobe was being freshened.

"He's quit me," she told herself. "I knowed he would. I was good 'nough when I had my looks. I can't stand no more." The cancer was eating, it seemed, at her very heart. She was much weaker, and could no longer go after the mules.

"Say, maw, let's go home," begged the small girl, large eyed, as she watched the woman's strange air.

"We ain't got no home, nor nothin'," replied the latter, somberly, "wait for yer pop. He'll take yuh."

The days were shortening. Mosquitoes buzzed about, even in the heat of the fire, as she made the supper, which she had planned to be her last, because she could bear no more. Tim might return, or he might not. She couldn't wait.

The children were talking about her, near at hand. "Oh, maw's too mean fur any use. Paw says so," said the girl.

Her mother put down the frying pans and unrolled her sleeves. So, even the children hated her. This was the end. Stealthily she left them, sneaking cautiously up the mountain trail, into the deepening gloom of the pines. From the fire below the odor of burning food was carried on the wind to her. "Let 'em rustle fur 'emselves," she thought, grimly. "I'm through with the hull outfit." Toiling upward, she reached a spring, where she drank. "It's right pretty here," she remarked, looking around. It was the first time she had ever felt the mountain charm. She got out the revolver she had brought along, with which to shoot herself, then paused a moment, closing her eyes. The gun fell into the spring with a splash ten minutes afterward, but she, leaning against a log, slept quietly while night came on.

* * *

"Flora! Flora! God, she can't a' clumb this high!" It

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was Tim's voice, holding a note of agony, and she awoke to find the sun shining upon the spring in the early morning. Shivering, she shrank close to the log.

"Over this way, pard—don't give up yet!" said another voice, eagerly. "We'll find her."

And then Tim and another man came up the trail and found her.

"Go 'way! I'm a-goin' to die in peace!" she shrieked, rousing fully.

But Tim gathered the thin body close to his heart and he was crying brokenly: "My ol' gal! My ol' woman!" he sobbed. "I got to camp last night an' found you gone. I been bad, but I didn't mean it. Here's the Swede come back with money from the claims we was pards on an' we're all a-goin' out to the town an' start over. They's a medicine man a-waitin' an'—an' I got your cayuse down below to ride to camp on. Things is goin' to be different now. Ain't you got a kiss for the ol' man?"

His wife's face twitched. "Honest, do yuh want me?" she quavered.

"You bet your life!" said Tim, "an' you're a-goin' to live like a lady!"

The Troubles of Two Working Girls.

SCENE: the telephone switchboard in the lobby of the Broadway hotel.

CHARACTERS: Annabelle, the Telephone Girl, and Myrtle, "in the business."

MYRTLE—Why, where's yer joolry, dear? Yuh ain't went and soaked that big ring, have yuh?

ANNABELLE (tearfully)—Oh, don't talk; ain't yuh heard? I dunno ef I'm afoot or hossback! Here, Mickey, the head barkeep's a robber, an' it's all over the Tenderloin that he blew it all on me, an' yunno, Myrtle, how much he spent on ME!

MYRTLE (exhibiting lively signs of curiosity)—For gracious sakes, whadda yuh mean? Has he lammed with the bankroll?

ANNABELLE—Him an' a shine friend, my dear. They didn't overlook no bets, an' just went down the line, coppin' what the guests paid fur bills an' swipin' the bar receipts. Oh, it's dretful. Here they ain't a gell along Broadway had a better reppitation than me, an' now it's ruint! Here's what makes me sore, yuh see. The very day before the pinch come off, didn't he ast me fur the loan of the diamond an' emerald ring he gimme, so's tuh make a flash before his uncle from Ireland who's got money!

MYRTLE (indignantly)—He oughta be ashamed, the beast! Say, listen! How much'd he git away with?

ANNABELLE—Why, the boss says him an' the shine friend sunk their hooks intuh ten thousand! An'

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all he spent round town fur me, fittin' up th' flat an' all that, 'cause a 'course I expected tuh marry him when he was buyin' the stuff—when it was paid fur I changed my mind, 'cause a gell's gotta right tuh pause on the brink ef she wants tuh—wudn't be more'n three thousand.

MYRTLE (suspiciously)—What'd he do with the rest? Yuh can't tell me they ain't some hussy mixed up in it. I think he's a very ungent'manly pusson not tuh at least hand yuh some coin, an' him with that roll. But where's the other diamonds he give yuh?

ANNABELLE—Mam's got 'em sowed inside her corset. Yunno maw's no lobster, an' she gimme the office that somma these fresh flatties might try tuh shake me down fur 'em, 'cause the boss is hollerin' 'bout what Mickey done with the money. I wudn't never talk tuh him again even ef he gits out. I ain't goin' tuh associate with a fella who'd rob his trustin' employer, even ef the boss is a district leader an' kin git plenty more. I got some respect fur myself, an' yuh bettcha life a poor workin' gell's gotta be careful. Still, ef it comes out in the papers, mebbe I'd gitta chanct tuh go intuh vodeville.

MYRTLE—Don't yuh give up the stuff, Annabelle! We gotta do the best we kin' an' it'd be just like that fella tuh send up an' ast yuh tuh let 'em go—he wudn't care ef yuh didn't have a ring tuh yer name!

ANNABELLE—Lemme 'lone fur that, dear! I wudn't give him a pleasant look. I ain't up agin it hard enough, so this Central has tuh git gay an' rag me 'bout it. I cud cry, I'm so mad! Hello—hello! Yunno, Myrtle, I b'lieve she keeps ringin' me a purpuss, an'—well, HELLO! Who? Spell it, I can't hear yuh. Am I the yella-headed thing what's brung poor Mickey tuh a prison cell? Say, lookahere! I'll have yuh tuck tuh one, too, f I ketch yuh! What? How dare yuh! I don't care who you are—oh, Myrtle, d'wuh hear her?—hello! WHO are yuh? Git offa that wire or I'll do sumpin'

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yuh put a bet on that! Covered me with di'monds? He done no sucha thing! Yer feared tuh come an' say that tuh my face! Hello, go to the—oh, excuse ME, mister; rully, I didn't see yuh; number? Yes, I'll git it—what? Oh, just a crazy party makin' a roar—hello! shut up!—no, I did NOT tell yuh tuh shut up, Central, I wanta number! Hello! Say, GIT offa that wire, Central, I want yuh tuh listen tuh me, or I'll git on my hat an' come down there an' hand yuh a slam in the lamp that'll last yuh! Hello? No, this ain't Commissioner Lantry's office; I dunno, but I s'pose he's at the track. Hello, Central, ARE yuh goin' tuh git that 10,000 John? I'll report yuh, see ef I don't. Gimme the manager, miss; d'yuh hear? One minnit, mister, I'll git it—hello! is that you, Frank? At home, sick? Well, let it go then. Now, I see why yuh're so funny, Central, but WAIT till my fren' the manager's down tuhморra, oh! yuh did git it at last? There yuh are—Number 4. Gosh! Hello! Yes, 4-11-44; it cert'nly is. No, I don't want tuh make no statement tuh the Evenin' Squirt, nor no paper; I don't like reporters, an' I got nothin' tuh say; so there! Well—oh, I did know the fella, fur that matter; but it's of no int'rest tuh me at all, not at ALL; see? Will my name be in the headin'? In those big red letters? Well, that's different. Yuh'll come up? Say, listen! Do yuh want a pictur' of me an' him, tuck at Coney Island? Then I got somma me alone over tuh the flat. Will yuh say I'm good lookin' an' modest? all right; I'll be here, then, an' I'll have the picture. But don't let on I told yuh, an' say the way he deceived me was shameful. Goo'bye.

(Curtain.)

J. Wallace Barrington's Troupe Leave a Board Bill.

THE buck dancer timidly approached Mrs. de Shine, the landlady. "I want to ast you sumpin'," he said uneasily. "You see, we ain't worked fur two weeks, but we open at Feeney's, Brooklyn, to-morrow, an' three weeks on the Poli circuit to foller"——

The landlady interrupted him. "You boys kin stick, but ef yuh don't settle next Satiddy, don't yuh never play Noo York again!" she exclaimed warningly. "Yuh been stallin' fur two weeks now. But the house ain't full, so I'll take a chanct on yuh this trip."

The buck dancer, relieved, hastened to leave before she could regret her decision. It was Sunday morning, a time of peace in most households. In the actors' boarding house departing guests clattered down the stairs, while fresh arrivals just off the road shouted greetings to their friends, dickered with perspiring baggagemen, who lugged in trunks and tramped heavily up and down.

Those who went away must settle their indebtedness first, and Mrs. de Shine stood guard at the foot of the stairs, reminding the tardy ones that they mustn't overlook a bet. She stowed the bills safely in her capacious stocking, digging up change when necessary from the same storage place.

"Hello, Maggie, old gal!" said John Fanchester, the burlesque manager, whose shows play the "Eastern Wheel," and who, with Dora Kittredge Fanchester, his wife, leading lady of the "Broadway Heiresses," always stopped with his old friend when he came to town.

"Lookin' younger'n ever!" he continued, gallantly,

BARRINGTONS LEAVE A BOARD BILL.

shaking Mrs. de Shine's pudgy and rather soiled hand. "Ain't she, kid?"

The statuesque Mrs. Fanchester laughed shrilly. "Give us yer mitt, Mag," said she, cordially. "Gee, if I ain't wore out! Week stands in them tank towns in the Pennsylvania oil district is sumpin' dretful! I ain't had my hair did proper in a month! I hope yuh got our letter, and kep' them rooms."

"Susy!" called the landlady. The sloppy-looking slavey responded from above.

"What?" she replied, from the third floor.

"The Fanchesters is comin' up! Unlock that door tuh the fust floor front!" yelled Mrs. de Shine. "An' gitta move on! I never see such a gell! Git that guy in 32 out, too! The Josh Sisters has tuck it! D'yuh hear me?"

"Yessum!" Susy was heard coming down from the third to the first floor, so the Fanchesters gathered up their grips, and jesting merrily with Biff & Fall, the acrobatic comedians, who had just entered the front hall, ascended to their apartment.

"Mis' de Shine!" called a lady in a red kimono, leaning over the upper railing, "Susy ain't give us but one towel!"

The landlady was rebuking an odorous expressman who had carelessly bumped a trunk into the aged hatrack, already wounded in many quarters.

"Yuh guys just pay a little attention, see?" she observed, angrily. "Smashin' up my hall! Ef yuh hit them banisters goin' up I'll make you wisht you hadn't!" The man promptly let the trunk slide to the floor. "Take it up yerself, then!" he replied, haughtily. "I been paid!" Whereupon he rushed out of the door. The complaining guest spoke again. "Me an' Birdie wants 'nother towel!" she shrieked.

Mrs. de Shine gazed upward sternly. "Yuh kin git it when yuh use the one yuh got," she answered, calmly. "Yuh gells was here last season, an' copped four fur make-up towels! Its yer own fault, Sadie!"

Muttering mutinously, Sadie disappeared. She couldn't make a very biting retort, because the charge was true.

BARRINGTONS LEAVE A BOARD BILL.

Mrs. de Shine's memory was the wonder of the profession.

"What we goin' tuh have fur dinner?" Clad in a dressing sacque and a blue petticoat, Mamie Slambrook, of Slambrook, Burke & Slambrook, the big scream on so many bills, peered forth from the front parlor. Mamie was an old-timer, and on most familiar terms.

"Stoo an' chicking," replied Mrs. de Shine. "Yuh ain't got no idee the price of meat now, either, my dear!"

"Is they puddin'?" pursued Mamie, interestedly. "I'm that sick of pie. I'd relish a hum-made puddin', but not bread—I hate them kind."

"I got a perf'y elegant plum puddin'," said Mrs. de Shine, enjoying the impression the remark so plainly made upon Mamie. "I set a good table, ef I do say it myself. They ain't nobuddy kin say Maggie de Shine ain't there with the goods. Say, ain't you changed yer hair? I ain't seed yuh folks since yuh went on the Poli circuit."

"Oh, my heavings, yes!" Mamie's rippling laugh was as soothing to ears polite as the gentle kiss of the saw as it strikes a knot in the obstinate hickory log. "I got so blamed sick of bein' a blonde, an' so many shines is gettin' theirs made yella, that I just had mine colored back," she said. "Ain't it swell? I set three hull hours gettin' it done, too. It's suttently an ordeal."

"Well, but they's an awful satisfaction in bein' framed up right," declared Mrs. de Shine. "I was expectin' a hull gang this mornin', an' they ain't here." As she finished speaking the bell rang. Mamie modestly closed her door, with a final flirt of her blue silk ruffles.

The landlady flung wide the portals, expectant of a guest. Her gaze fell upon a handsome black-mustached gentleman, in a full-collared and cuffed overcoat, and a top hat. She rapidly speculated as to whether he might be a faro bank dealer or a melodrama manager. His make-up would do for either.

"Ah, madam, this, I believe, is umpty-umph Irving place?" he inquired, politely. "I might have recognized

your smiling features from my dear, Al Reeves' description. We desire accommodations."

"Well, any fren' of my fren' Al is suttently welcome," smiled Mrs. de Shine. The smile grew as she noted the sparkling diamond in his tie and the flashing ring on the hand which, accidentally, of course, rested carelessly upon the hatrack, where the light made the jewelry gleam delightfully.

He explained pleasantly that the "Only a Motorman's Daughter" company, of which he was manager, were just in from the road, after a long, hard season. They wished the very best of board and lodging, now that they were again in dear old New York. "Miss Idalene de Bourbon, our leading lady, must have her private bath, and if you have a nice little suite for me, it will do nicely. I like my comforts," said the manager.

"Well, lemme see, now. How many is they?" she queried. There were twelve. This was like finding money. And as the manager looked so prosperous, and was so amiable, the crafty Mrs. de Shine boosted the price a couple of dollars on each room. After briefly considering the terms, Mr. J. Wallace Barrington agreed to them.

He opened the door, beckoned a group of ladies and gentleman who stood awaiting his call outside, and the "Only a Motorman's Daughter" company trooped in. Miss de Bourbon demanded that she be instantly shown to her "rooms." As one room was considered sufficient by ordinary boarders, this made a hit. Mrs. de Shine flew upstairs, burst upon the Johnny Fanchesters, and requested that they move.

"I'll switch yuh folks tuh 'leven, see?" she began, vivaciously, "An' that'll give Miss de Bourbon this'n an' the back, an' the bath's next. 'Leven's just as good a room, Johnny."

"But we're all fixed here," grumbled Dora Kittredge Fanchester, who was washing out a week's accumulation of stockings in the bowl. The Fanchesters moved, and they privately decided that if they had to be thrown down for a new bunch it was a shabby trick.

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"I heard that guy in the plug hat shootin' the con, see?" volunteered Alicia Smathers, of Hodge & Smathers, the "refined comedy duo," "an' I'll bet all I got in my sock he's a false alarm! The idee of me an' Stella bein' put out of the third floor front, an' put in a teenchy room on the air shaft, so two them dramer dames kin git a room with sunlight! It's my last time here. I kin go where they make a fuss over me, I kin."

Mrs. de Shine was pleasantly excited. She switched the College Boys' Quartette into a room with no heat, and Vivienne Desmond, the Parisian Chanteuse (from North Clark street) into a gloomy den on the top floor, when Vivienne had been cosily ensconced in a first floor room adjoining the bath!

By dinner time the regular boarders were in revolt.

"It's the first time I ain't set at that fust table in four years," growled the Property Man." "An' here I got to stall around in this hall and wait for a gang of dubs to git through feedin'." The hall was filled with hungry persons. Through the half-closed door of the dining room they could see the melodrama people, merrily and earnestly assaulting the delicacies of the Sunday meal, and everybody knows the first helpings are the best.

Mrs. de Shine personally waited upon the charming manager, who, having shed his imposing overcoat, displayed a smart check suit, with which a red tie contrasted prettily.

"Did you see their trunks goin' up?" asked Vivienne, as she carefully cached her gum under the stair rail, to be recovered later. "The hull mob had them big Naylor's. I must say fur a bum thriller, they're awful stuck up."

Harry Pounder, the pianist, was reading the Sunday paper. "They ain't in the route list," he announced. "I think they're a lot of dubs. I never heard of an Idalene de Bourbon, an' I been in the show business a long time."

"I knewed a gell named Birdie de Bourbon, but she's in burlesque," remarked Dora Fanchester. "We ain't comin' here no more, not an' git the hooks throwed into us in this way."

Gorged completely, the dramatic company at last emerged. Miss de Bourbon paused. "Before I forget it," she said, "us ladies has a fad fur doing up our own rooms. So the gell can just bring round the towels, an' we'll do the rest. I s'pose you change the sheets twict a day?"

Mrs. de Shine gasped, but she was game. "Well, I—we kin, I guess, dear," said she. "Suttenly. I want yuh tuh all feel like yuh was in yer own home here. Go as fur as yuh like. I was onct in the business myself; of course that was some time ago. Do yuh ladies like dawgs? 'Cause I'll let yuh have Fido fur a while."

The soubrette, the ingenue and light comedy leads broke into little joyous cries of appreciation over Fido, the poodle, who leaped upon them, yelping in his usual cheerful fashion. The soubrette kissed Fido.

"The Motorman's Daughter" troupe might have had the house, after that.

"'Es a booful baby, 'ess 'e is!" cooed Miss de Bourbon, tenderly, as the new boarders bore the squealing, scratching Fido upstairs.

"They're a grand lot of folks," remarked Mrs. de Shine. "Not like some the people what abuses a pore little harmless dawg. The man what'll kick my Fido is capable of eatin' a child!"

The Property Man flushed darkly. Several snickers came from various quarters. "Then keep him outer my room!" he burst out, to hide his embarrassment. "A feller can't leave nothin' on his bed without that mutt chaw-in' it up! Life's gettin' to be a hell in this house. I've been played for a come-on onct to-day, an' kep' waitin' fur my chuck, an' me with a concert to-day, an' you know it!"

The boss regarded him coldly. "Mista Johnson, yuh've et my food an' been treated like one of the family fur Heaving knows how long!" she exclaimed, with ill-suppressed passion. "But them crool words is the limit! Leave this house, when yuh get yer trunk packed! Yuh

won't have tuh do more'n tie up yer collars an' a extry shirt!"

"Hully gee! listen at her!" whispered the tenor of the College Boys' Quartette. "That old gal kin go some in a mix-up, too. I seen her an' a couple dames who tries to hand her the rinky-dink go to the floor, an' Maggie beat 'em up scand'lous."

The Property Man arose. Never before had a bluff of his landlady's failed to subdue him.

"Then, it's bright eyes, good-by," he shouted. "I give you two weeks' board last night. Jar loose from six bucks, an' it's twenty minutes fur a new book. Lemme out an' keep your pup away from me, or you'll sure be shy a poodle! Gimme my six!"

Mrs. de Shine burst into tears at his harsh language. "Oh, Bill, dontchu go!" she sobbed. "Yuh know yuhself I ain't myself on a Sunday, with bein' upset an' me not strong, neither! I take back all I said, honest, I do. Now, do set down an' eat yer puddin'. Here's Susy went an' brung yuh a extry big dish. Git'im a cuppa cawfee, too, Susy. Won't yuh stick fur the big show?"

But the worm had turned. "Nope, I won't!" answered the Property Man, bitterly. "It's twenty-three fur mine!"

Mrs. de Shine ceased to weep. "Let the bets go as they lay, then," said she, with dignity. "Here's yer old six. Now, go out an' knock my house. I don't care. I kin git along."

The juggler took the Property Man's vacant chair in silence, and Vivienne coonfully swiped the pudding which he had scorned. The heavy man of the dramatic company looked in. "S'cuse me; where's the bath on the fourth floor?" he inquired.

Mrs. de Shine, aroused from painful reflection, assumed her best smile. "Just acrost the hall from yuh an' yer wife," she said. "An' yuh kin allus git in. A' course, I don't furnish no soap, but they's most allus some hot water, ef summon ain't used it all, that is."

The Property Man could go. She had twelve new boarders, paying a fat price, and if he wanted to be mean,

he could. But she'd miss him, at that—the oldest boarder of all.

* * *

By the dinner hour on Tuesday night the sway of vaudeville in the actors' boarding house had given place to the reign of drama. Determined vaudevillians massed in the hall a half hour before the bell rang. Forming in a solid phalanx, the "Only a Motorman's Daughter" company would charge into the ranks of variety, intent upon reaching the table first.

Johnny Fanchester led the burlesquers, who naturally cast their lot with the vaudevillians, and Idalene de Bourbon, her near-diamond alligator waggling defiantly in her pale locks, held fast to the strong arm of the gallant J. Wallace Barrington, as he boastfully bade his troupe follow, even to death.

The tenor of the "College Boys," smitten with love for the troupe's ingenue—who, while lovely to the eye, was considerably over seven—had shamelessly deserted his partners, and now fed with the "legits." The result of these far from friendly battles was that several members of each faction landed at the table together..

Mrs. de Shine was captivated by J. Wallace. So much so that by Thursday noon he succeeded in making a hurry-up touch for fifty, just until he received his percentage on Saturday night. Dora Fanchester was "resting" this week, after an arduous season, and she appeared one night in a homelike negligee, a gorgeous pink kimono generously scattered with yellow flowers.

She addressed the boss after the soup had been absorbed. "Fur three days we ain't been able tuh get intuh the bath," she said. "An' me'n Mr. Fanchester's sick an' tired of it! That big battleaxe of that bum trick what's playin' some dump nobuddy ever heard of has got the key! We want our rights!"

"Good fur you, Dora! Hip! hip! hurray!" yelled the three loyal College Boys' Quartetters. "We was made to stop singin' at 1 o'clock in the mornin', because some slob can't study his part less it's quiet! Give it to her!"

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"Mebbe," went on Dora, waving her richly jeweled hand, "plain folks who owns six or eight burlesques ain't high-class enough fur yer noo frens, Mis' de Shine!"

Miss de Bourbon spoke rapidly in the landlady's ear, then got out of reach. Dora had a menacing air about her.

"Call yerself a lady, an' use such unbecomin' lang-witch!" cried Mrs. de Shine. "Miss de Bourbon says she ain't goin' tuh be insulted, an' I'm fur her! I must ast yuh tuh beg her parding!"

"Put 'em out!" urged J. Wallace, in a low tone. "They ain't refined."

Dora, red-faced and very mad, wrapped her gay raiment about her svelte form. Then she mounted her chair, stepped upon the table, creating havoc among the mashed potatoes, prunes and mounds of pickled beets, and, grasping the water pitcher, she hurled it at Miss de Bourbon. The latter, shrieking wildly, ducked her fair head and joined Fido, who yelped in anguish under the table, some brutal enemy having dealt him a rude kick.

A general rough house followed. It spread to the hall, where four sketch teams, three acrobats, a hoop roller and eight regular actors who had been invited to dinner by J. Wallace joined in the fray. Two fat policemen came hustling up from Fourteenth street, and every one called every one else a disgrace to the show business. Many a blackened eye was skilfully painted for the night's performance.

Led by Dora, in a sealskin coat and all her diamonds, battered, but still active, the burlesquers and vaudevillians brought down their own luggage, paid what they owed, and proceeded in a body down Fourteenth street to another boarding house.

Mrs. de Shine, given her choice, had stuck to her new friends. She was under the spell of the fascinating J. Wallace, and to cinch it, he borrowed fifty more. He said the show was going great. Packed at every performance, and looked back at the same house again in two weeks,

certainly a remarkable record. She decided to cater in future only to the drama, leaving vaudeville alone.

* * *

It was Saturday night, and lonely in the Maison de Shine, with no jovial show folks chasing in and out, playing the piano in the parlor and cutting up in the halls. The landlady told Susy she didn't care, and that she always had liked a quiet life, anyway.

Mornings, teams and singles called to get their mail, but never a gag did they get off, as in the old days. These days were but a few hours back, and yet it seemed a year. After dinner on Saturday several members of the dramatic company, for whose sake Mrs. de Shine had broken up a happy home, were late.

And when they arrived those who had eaten seemed to have important business upstairs. As they went up they nudged each other, and chuckled gaily.

In five minutes a procession, each person bearing a heavy suit case, tiptoed down the stairs, and out of the front door. J. Wallace and Miss de Bourbon went ahead, stifling their merriment. At the corner they relieved a man of the care of five suit cases like the ones they carried which he had been watching.

A little later the remaining five troupers joined the party, took up their grips, and set sail for the Subway entrance, J. Wallace ahead. What did it mean?

At 12 only Mrs. de Shine, Susy and the cook, who was asleep, occupied the big house. Sitting anxiously upon the stairs, the landlady watched the clock. Where were they? The boarders were to have settled in full after their show, leaving in the morning. Filled with a strange fear, the boss went up to their rooms, to which the maid had been denied entrance by the industrious ladies.

There wasn't a trunk there! She had been "bunked"!

Mrs. de Shine gathered up the faithful Fido and slowly went downstairs. It was as still as death. She wept forlornly into Fido's coat.

"I wisht they'd all break a laig!" she wailed, miserably.

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There was a ring at the bell. Then a key grated in the lock, and the property man walked in.

"By gosh!" he exclaimed. "Found I kep' my old key! Why—what's up?"

She told him the sad tale. "Well, I seen a gang chasin' up the street 'bout seven, all carryin' them soot cases those collapsible trunks fold into, but I didn't think nothin'," he said, thoughtfully. "Well, they stung you, Mag. Guess you need a boarder or two, don't you?"

"Mista Johnson, please come back!" she cried, penitently.

"Sure; I was comin', anyway," laughed the Property Man.

When the Thunder Mountain Mail Came In.

It was in the days before the wagon road—which has since crawled around the Salmon River Mountains and down into the mudholes that lie between the summits, following the old Sheepeater Indian trails to the gold camp of Roosevelt, Idaho. The mail came in, over thirty feet of snow, by private carrier. Each letter cost the anxious prospector who waited it two bits.

But he was sure to get it, for Mose Puckett thought no more of two bits than of his good right eye. He made the trip from Idaho City in about ten days, packing the mail sack, his blankets and a light outfit of grub on his strong old back. He skidded easily forward on his snowshoes where the crust was hard, stubbornly forging ahead when the fresh snow impeded progress. It clogged his shoes at times until his legs ached cruelly from the strain of lifting his feet every few steps to shake off the wet burden.

If a sudden heavy storm blew up, with the freezing wind whipping his face and turning his sheep dog Sport into a weird white beast, Mose took out his small axe, hastily cut spruce boughs and made himself and Sport a wickiup, where, sheltered somewhat, he snoozed under his blanket and little tarpaulin, thinking of nothing in particular.

It was an open Winter "outside," although the hills held great drifts. Mose rode from Idaho City to a point near the town of Banner on Jim Dodge's bobsled, and to the end of the wagon road on a cayuse to which

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Dodge staked him. He left his mount at a ranch house for Dodge to reclaim later and, strapping on his shoes, made tracks toward McPherson's Camp, a couple of tents which marked the joining of the Bear and Garden Valley trails.

McPherson was mighty glad to see Mose. It meant some one to play solo with before bedtime, so he set up the drinks in his joy.

"She's awful deep in Pen Basin, Mose," he remarked as they ate bacon and venison, with thick slices of "sour dough" bread, the work of McPherson's hands. "Ben Caswell come down from the south fork o' Monumental, an' he was about out. Said he got ketched in a drift three hull days an' liked tuh never git loose.

"I been awful lucky here, though. I'm buildin' a big log shack fur Summer, 'cause the rush is comin' when the trails are free, sure pop! An' I'm packin' in every darned thing the most fasteedious tenderfoot kin hanker fur!"

"Who's buildin' it?" asked Mose, stuffing himself—he wouldn't eat in such comfort for some days to come. "I ain't seed no one but you 'round here. I reckon to beat my last trip, if I don't stub my toe. Got the Chris'mus mail, an' them guys'll be crazy fur it. I'm due tuh Marble City (a camp), an' Mule Creek Cabin, an' the big camp. Sport's carryin twenty pounds of mail, too. Who'd you say was helpin' you?"

"Well, sir, I had young Mills, from Placerville, up here. an' he gets honin' fur comp'ny, an' when Ben come along it's puck-a-chee fur him," answered McPherson sadly. "I'd give three a day tuh a good axeman, an' that's some money!"

"Sure is!" observed Mose thoughtfully. "Three a day!"

"Say, look a-here, Mose! Help me out, can't you? Them fellers dunno but what the treetops is covered out here, an' a week's work's twenty-one bucks! How about it?"

The trusted mail man arose, lifted the mail sack and

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Sport's little pack and flung them under McPherson's bunk.

"I'll do it!" he declared.

* * * * *

The shack was not completed and yet ten days had passed. Sport, in the cheerful company of a yellow pup and a red setter, had settled to a comfortable life of ease, while Mose and McPherson played solo and cribbage nights, in daytime searching the hillsides for just the right timber.

This they felled and dragged by ropes to the camp, while Mose also displayed his skill at the making of "shakes," a rude form of hand-made shingle. The woodrats gnawed contentedly at the leather of the forgotten mail sacks, and a chipmunk, entering the tent raised on logs by some secret way, labored furiously until finally his inquisitive little nose poked itself into the Christmas mail and he disappeared inside the bag, followed by a woodrat.

Three weeks—and then Mose started guiltily. He must not tarry beyond the next dawn. Hurriedly he dug out the sack, got together his outfit and made ready.

McPherson told him not to worry, so he didn't.

* * * * *

From their camps in the hills the prospectors came, in ones and twos, down to Mule Creek Cabin in search of the mail.

Injun Billy and Tonopah Smith, from way over on Profile, got in, half starved, because if they hadn't thrown away their packs they couldn't have made it. Yukon Murphy and his pard, young Haskill, from Colorado, and Henry Webber and "the Colonel," all met at Jim Cushing's camp.

Flour was twenty dollars a hundred, but Jim fed 'em as if he had a million bags cached.

"I'm dyin' to hear from my old woman," said Tono-

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pah; 'told her to sell a couple lots out'n Peory, an' I bet you she got a good price."

"I'd like to have some of my maw's cookin'," sighed Injun Billy, "but I'll get a letter. That's sumpin'."

Henry Webber was all upset for fear his girl had gone back on him, and the rest were fretful to a high degree.

Ten weeks before old Mose had strapped on the letters to God's country and hit the trail. Could he be dead buried in a drift? Many a dead man had the snow claimed.

Injun Billy cried over it, but Yukon Murphy and his pard set out toward Indian Creek, by which trail the mail man would come. They were on the top of the big summit—too lately seen by whites to have a name—when they spotted Mose and Sport toiling upward, Mose glancing at the notches in the treetops which marked the trail. Big pines appeared small bushes now, their trunks buried in snow.

Yukon insisted on carrying the sack, and when Mose had told a dreadful tale of hardships endured, Yukon privately decided to make the gang put up an extra piece of change for their brave carrier.

* * * * *

"Ten letters fur William Prouty" (Injun Billy), said Mose; "two an' a half, Bill."

Bill shelled out happily even before the bag was opened.

Mose undid the thongs. Out fluttered a thousand bits of paper. He plunged a hand inside, drawing out a dozen or so of letters still intact. The chipmunk and the woodrat had settled the mail. All of Injun Billy's ten were safe. Feverishly, while horrid curses from homesick goldhunters rent the air, he opened them. Six copies of the same bill for a Boise weekly, and four advertisements from a Chicago clothier was what poor Billy drew.

Again Mose repeated the story of his terrible trip. What could they do? A woodrat might get in any-

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thing. But while Mose talked, Sport barked mournfully, and then excitedly at him.

"That dawg's tryin' to speak!" declared Tonopah.

Later, Mose made camp for himself and Sport.

"It's a damn good thing you can't," said he.

Old Peter.

PETER had been a stage doortender for thirty years. He was gray-haired, but still strong enough to repel boarders in the shape of various persons who wanted to get in without a pass from the front of the house.

Peter lived alone, and had a bit of money, for he drew two salaries. The owner of the theatre and other property owners on the block employed him as night watchman from midnight, when the show was over until daylight.

He was most religious, and read his Bible constantly. Vaudeville performers who desired information as to certain rules of the house, found Peter reading so busily that he could scarce find time to answer a query.

All his life, Peter had secretly yearned to go to work in the early morning, returning at evening to a pleasant time of rest. Others lived in the day, while he must hoe his row in darkness. Sometimes a tear spattered down on his Bible as Peter wished and wished with all his might to just be able to go to bed at say 10 of the clock like regular folks. He would read a bit and comfortably smoke, with his woollen slippers and a warm quilt about his old legs to frighten off the aches which came along if rain was in the air.

He was so sick of these fresh show people, with their wearying jokes and never ceasing gabble about some one or something. Peter grew peevish as the years went by, and vaudeville acts changed and so did stage managers and "grips." New faces among the actors appeared, with only an infrequent visit from the old guard, who said, "Hullo, Pete: got the Bible yet?" and shook his hand.

The house booked the new acts, European and

domestic, to keep up with the times. Peter hated them all, because he wanted to get away, out in the daylight, instead of sleeping through it. He was a little feebler, too, so the manager had told him to stop night watchman's duty, and go home to his bed. He would get the money just the same, because when the manager had hired Peter both were young, and Peter had stuck when others had not. The manager couldn't forget.

He stood watching a sketch from the first entrance, one night, when the property man approached.

"I didn't want to knock, gov'nor," said he, "but old Pete's gettin so mean the performers kin' hardly git past him to come in to do their own turn. He's terrible grouchy. We ain't done anything to him.

The manager went out to Peter's little cubbyhole. It was snug and warm, and Peter was reading the Bible and weeping forlornly. He tried to hide the witness of his eyes as the door opened.

"Why, Peter," the manager's voice expressed genuine concern. "what's wrong? Are you sick?"

"Oh, I just wisht I was dead," burst out Peter, a wrinkled red hand over his face.

"Is it money, Peter? You haven't been playing those fool tips the boys are always throwing their money away on?"

Then Peter told his boss all about the yearning.

"Well, old lunatic!" cried the manager. "You couldn't find as good a job as this. I don't ask you to do much, do I?"

"Nope," answered Peter dejectedly.

Before the manager left, he said that if Peter wanted a job in the daytime he should have it.

The actors going out marveled at Peter's smile. He even spoke to one or two, a strange and unusual occurrence. At last the daylight! He sighed rapturously.

* * * * *

His hour for starting work at the new place was

OLD PETER

8 A. M., and his labor consisted of acting as buffer between the secretary of an important man of affairs and the clamorous public, which lied and wheedled in an effort to pass the guardian.

It was biting cold in the early mornings when Peter, awakened by the alarm clock, whose nerve racking voice seemed to rip through his very flesh, shivering got up. The people on his way to work were ill-tempered and tired looking, instead of blithe and gay in the cheerful sunlight, as he had expected.

And the aches were much worse. He thought it was from getting up in the cold before Mrs. McPherson's furnace had fully heated her house, where he roomed. Afternoons, of old, it had been warm as toast when he arose to partake of his ham and eggs and tea out in the kitchen with the fat landlady.

He stopped reading the Bible, because he had no time, for nights Peter was loafing about the stage of the theatre scowling at the new doortender and talking show business with a garrulousness which caused the stage hands to wonder at the change.

One night he waited until the last one had slammed the stage door, looked angrily in at the new man's paper and little trifles strewn on the table in the cuddy-hole, and at last stamped home to bed.

He was very lonely, for the few cronies with whom he had formerly chatted in the late afternoons were not to be found at night. Everything seemed upside down. He decided that he was too old to live any longer and thought seriously of turning on the gas and ending it. He went to sleep at his post in the office one day and endured a severe reprimand. After that suicide seemed really pleasant. He would go to the old showshop once more, sniff in the good old smells and sounds, and view for the last time the people in their make-up. It would be the final curtain.

No one noticed Peter as he slipped behind a piece of scenery, seating himself on the magician's table. He began to cry softly and heart-brkenly.

OLD PETER

"Peter!" said some one, shaking him a little later.
"Get up! Get up, and go back to your old job, you old ass!"

The manager was laughing, but his touch was very tender.

"To the door, boss?" asked Peter, his face alight.

"Yes, and right now, too. And if little Miss Smith's lush of a husband shows up kick him out!"

"I'll beat his face in," said Peter ferociously. Grinning, he went back to work.

Clancy, the Copper and the Kid.

SLIM CLANCY was "out" again, back to the big town and good old Bowery, which isn't such a dead place when one knows his way around. Six years at "hard," up the river, had decided Clancy that porch-climbing was a bad game, and now he meant to jump out and hustle for a job, and live square. And it was not as easy as it sounds, when, since he first, as a kid, learned how to cop a leather and stall for his big brother 'Tom, he'd done nothing but steal for a living.

"I dunno as they's anny sense in makin' this play," Clancy ruminated, one eye on the tin wash pitcher, which stood on a dirty stand in his little room in Clinton street. "But mebbe a guy like me kin be on the level, at that. I'm as strong as ever I was, an' I'm there wit' the noive to ast fur woik, too. An' livin' down here on the East Side's cheap."

Six years is a long time, and many come and go among coppers as well as criminals; there would be little chance of running into the old gang, and if he did, why, he'd say he was trying to act right, and it would be settled. His first night's sleep free from the warm air filled with the odor of antiseptics, and the forbidding iron cell door which faced him first as he awoke, braced him wonderfully. He wanted to go back and burrow in the far from cleanly heap of bedclothes, just because he could, with no gruff guard to turn him out for the dreary day's unrewarded toil. He had over a hundred dollars, some of it earned in a shop, the rest a present sent years before from the "Big Five," with whom he had pulled off jobs which made Headquarters curse their cleverness, and he stowed it away carefully about himself. Once, with a century in

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his kick, he would have routed out the old crowd, and together they would have rioted while the coin lasted. But an honest man must hoard his savings to tide over bleak, hungry spaces between jobs. It seemed as though, starting out in this way, differently than ever before, he ought to do it properly. Up the river, when the chaplain prayed, Clancy never even listened, carrying on a conversation with his fellow convicts by means of a system of wig-wagging, which would have shocked the chaplain, encouraged by the apparently reverent silence which greeted his efforts to make converts to the faith. Clancy carefully pulled down the ragged shade which flapped in the breeze that came in, bearing a cheerful smell of cooking from the little Jewish restaurant across the street. Then, flushing a bit, he knelt, burying his face in the straw mattress, and prayed in his own way. "Say, God, do the best youse kin fur me!" he pleaded earnestly. "I ain't nawthin' but a bum, but just watch me! I won't nail nawthin' what I don't woik fur, an' that's no kid. An' I wisht youse'd kind o' keep an eye on me. Amen." He buttoned his coat over the sweater he had bought the night before, on arriving from Sing Sing, and went out. It was a week before he found a job. That wasn't a good one, but bouncer in a Second avenue joint, where the back room patrons sometimes got rowdy and punched their lady friends, was better than nothing. And it was here that he saw the Kid. A frowsy, peroxidized female came in at midnight, on a Sunday, dragging a boy of five with her. "Gimme some booze!" said she, noisily, to the barkeeper, who appeared. "An' give the brat some, too. Keep 'im quiet."

"I wouldn't," advised the barkeeper, casting a pitying eye at the child, who sat huddled up on his chair, coughing violently. "A little soda, now, eh? That's better for a kid."

"I'd kill 'im fur a nickel!" said the amiable parent viciously. "Keepin' me broke lookin' out fur him."

Clancy drew nearer. He had been sitting in a corner,

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smoking a cigarette. "Hello, Bill," he said to the boy, patting his head. "How goes it?"

For answer the child stood up on the chair, reached up both arms to Clancy's neck, and sobbed bitterly. "Shut up!" cried the woman. "I'll put yuh in the home, sure!"

* * *

Clancy was lonesome. He hadn't a friend in town, because he wouldn't go near the old crowd, and feared to make new ones. They might find out about him, and tell. He grasped the woman's arm, excitedly. "Give him to me," he urged. "I'll take him, an' feed him. Will youse? An' that'll let youse out. I won't be mean tuh him." The barkeeper, returning, tried to dissuade Clancy, but the mother, waiving formalities in the matter of adoption, hailed the offer joyously. And about four, when his duties were ended, and the last customer had done brawling with his fellows, Clancy hopped on a Second avenue car, changed at Madison street, and landed at the little room, bearing a sleepy burden wrapped in his overcoat. "I got tuh be grabbin' off anoder kind of a job, see?" he explained to Kid, a day or so later. "Summers where I kin git troo by night time, an' we kin have more time."

"An' buy a hossie," put in Kid, hopefully.

"Sure, or a autymobile," agreed Clancy, grinning. "Youse never kin tell, we might git money yet. I got a plan in me nut." But the Kid was under the bed after the engine, which Clancy had bought him, which always ran wherever there was most dust, so Clancy ceased speaking. Most of his hoard of cash had gone to fix up Kid with warm clothes. And didn't Clancy have a fine time with the buttons and bands with which the young gentleman's garments were kept together? Kid showed him all about it, and Clancy's stiff fingers ached after he was through buttoning and washing his charge, but he liked to do it.

"This is the answer, Kid," said he contentedly. "Why, a guy ain't got tuh be a crook ef he don't want tuh. A'course, I ust tuh tear off a t'ousand sometimes, an' was

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a high roller, but hully chee! It's better this way." Kid was no lovely, fair-haired pet. He had a little hooked nose, black eyes, and greasy hair, and his name was Ikey, but Clancy was as fond of him as if he had been Irish born, and in return Kid was for Clancy, first and last. They ate messes of potato salad and sausages, bad coffee and heavy bread, which Clancy purchased and brought home, or dined in a five-cent restaurant at the lower end of the Bowery. The Kid grew fat, thriving on the diet, and Clancy lost the sallow look he had brought back from "stir."

* * *

He got a job carrying bricks for a political clubhouse in process of construction on East Broadway. The contractor took scabs as well as union men, if they did their work. Clancy got his \$1.50 a day, and worked hard, but he didn't mind it. Kid played with a good natured Polish woman's olive branches during the day, and at noon, while Clancy ate his dinner, Minna, the oldest girl, brought Kid over, to sit with Clancy, and he'd go capering around, building little houses with the bits of lumber which lay about. One day a plain clothes man from Headquarters came along to see the new clubhouse. He was with the district captain, and they stopped. "Are these men registered?" idly inquired the detective. Clancy had just bidden Kid good-by, and he heard the voice. Its owner was the man who had secured his conviction and made it stick when a certain influence had got the rest of Clancy's partners free. Clancy had stolen the copper's "girl," a lady of uncertain character, but even though she were not of the cast of Vere de Vere, the copper didn't want a crook beating him out.

Clancy began industriously piling bricks into his hod. It was a long shot that he would be recognized. His mustache was gone, and he looked fifteen years older, and he wore a laborer's flannel shirt, dusty, heavy shoes, and worn overalls.

"Hello, Slim, turned saint?" Clancy went on up the

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ladder with his bricks, but the other waited until he came down. The world suddenly seemed hard and cruel. This fellow would knock Clancy to the boss, even pinch him "on suspicion" if he felt like it.

"Sir?" returned Clancy in answer to a second call.

"Nothing, now," said the "flattie" calmly. "I just wanted to be sure. I could never miss that scar on your face." He had given it to Clancy, a long time back, when the latter wore good clothes and was a sporty chap, and pulled a gun when things grew hot. Clancy had pulled it just a bit too late, once, and the enemy fired first, grazing his cheek in a nasty way.

"Cookin' up something, eh?" laughed the detective. "Honest man, and all that!"

Clancy went on working. He felt sick all over, because if this man wished he could prevent any one hiring an ex-convict, no matter how real the convict's reformation. It had happened plenty of times before. Next day, when he came to work, the boss didn't need him. Was letting several go, he said easily, and the scabs went first, before union men. Clancy was wise. The enemy had spoken.

He got another job, working in a sewer, his back aching with the endless bending and shoveling. Three days, and he was again tramping miserably around looking for work. He ran into "Boston Harry," an all around crook. Startled by an old pal's shabby condition, the crook amiably offered to take him in on a crib-cracking expedition which would shortly occur.

"No, many t'anks, old felly," said Clancy, "but I'm tryin' tuh be on the level—no offense tuh youse—an' I better keep on tryin'."

"Be a mark, if you want to, Slim," said Frank, disgustedly. "There's nothin' in it. They'll be muggin' you over again some day, see if they don't."

And so they did. Clancy was down on the docks, with a temporary job loading cargo aboard a freighter. Kid was at home, sleeping, for this was night and day work, and pay by the hour, and Clancy wanted to earn all he could, now it was breaking so hard for them. "The cap-

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tain wants to see you, Clancy!" It was his friend the flattie and his partner, and they took Clancy to their precinct station house, and gave him a night in a cell. The magistrate discharged him next morning.

"Judge, I ain' done a wrong t'ing, s'help me," cried Clancy, piteously, "an' I got a kid waitin' fur me home. Oh, chee, yer Honor, gimme a chanct. I'm only tryin' tuh be square, an' the cops won't let me."

"Go, Clancy, and be an honest man," said His Honor, much affected, and later he scored the man who had brought Clancy in, which didn't make the flattie's feeling for Clancy any kinder.

"Where was yuh, Mickey?" prattled the Kid. "Couldn't get dressed wif'out yuh."

Clancy held back his tears, and gathered the small person to his breast. He rustled some food when Kid said he had a pain 'cause his tummy ached, and they ate together, Kid babbling contentedly and Clancy listening, half mad with wondering if the persecution would keep on. A six days' hunt resulted in a good job in Harlem, at \$1.50 a day, helping a blacksmith. Clancy moved Kid up there, and breathed easy. It was a long way from the East Side. But on Saturday night of the first week the boss said sternly he wanted no criminals around his shop, and Clancy understood.

* * *

He cleaned windows in Brooklyn, then landed back on the Bowery, a little shy on regular feeds himself, but Kid hadn't missed one. Then one day the flattie, who turned up at all times and places, met Clancy.

"Why don't you turn a trick, Slim?" he sneered. "A slick guy like you can get a bundle in an hour, and yet you go dubbing around doing common work. You, who used to be aces with all the chorus girls, too! I'm surprised."

Clancy choked back the curses which he wanted to hurl at the enemy, and answered shortly. He tried to find a way by which he could get fare to Philadelphia together.

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It was big, and the flattie wouldn't follow there. But every cent went for food and a place to sleep now, and he simply couldn't get it. He even timorously went into a saloon where he had spent thousands of his former loot over the bar, but a new man ran it now, and there was nothing doing.

There came a day when Kid must go without a meal. Then Clancy decided being honest was foolish, and he made hurried preparation to return to his old calling. Near by the place in Harlem where he had worked a week was a fine apartment house. The blacksmith had chatted about the tenants. They were all rich, and "swell." And Clancy, from old-time habit, had noted a dozen ways of getting into the place by the fire escapes and other means. He proposed to take a chance.

Kid slept, muttering in a dream, and Clancy, in his old suit, departed cautiously, in order not to wake him. It was a long walk to Harlem in a biting January wind. His overcoat was in pawn, and his blood, thinned by lack of food and warm clothing, seemed like little streams of icy water in his veins. It was late when he had found out just how the patrolman made his rounds. Clancy slipped around to the rear of the big building when the coast was clear. It was easy to climb to the first floor, where the fire escape began. He passed windows on the ascent, through which he could see people, warm and cheery, enjoying themselves. At the fourth floor all was dark, and a window was opened an inch or so, for air. He peered in. No sound of breathing came from inside, and he carefully raised the sash. It didn't squeak, luckily, so he climbed in. It was warm and pleasant. In a smaller room, off the first, a man lay in bed, breathing regularly in deep sleep. Clancy had entered via the dressing room. He tiptoed through the flat, carrying his shoes tied together by a lace.

No one else about, but a woman's things showed that one lived there. And there was a little fur coat, and a fur cap, and these articles he put together for Kid. A noise came from the bedroom. The man was awake, perhaps.

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A second or two, and Clancy was at the bedside. A gun flashed in the dim light, pulled by the man in bed from under his pillow, but Clancy, desperate, snatched it, and beat the man wildly on the temples with it. The other, moaning, sank back weakly. Clancy tied him hand and foot, with a sheet ripped in two, and gagged him as well.

There were several diamond rings and pins, a fine overcoat, and plenty of thick, woolly underwear. Clancy selected what would come in handy, then searched the man's trousers hanging over a chair. Seventy dollars resulted, which he pouched delightedly. He went to the kitchen, found a supply of food, and supped heartily, putting up a good lunch for Kid when he finished. He turned on the light in the dining-room. A note lay on the table, and on top of it a thick roll of tens and twenties. He read the note. There was five hundred.

"Dear Jim: Mamma came over and wanted me to go back with her. Will be back by 10 A. M. 'Phone me if you need me. I am leaving mamma's belated Christmas present. Isn't it lovely?—MAUD."

And it was addressed to the flattie who had made Clancy a thief again!

"Hully chee," said Clancy, softly. "Here's where he gets his."

Ten minutes afterward he was down in the street. The big overcoat hid his old clothes, and the other stuff was in a suitcase he had found. No one stopped him, and by three he was with Kid.

"Down tuh Mexico fur ours, now, Kid," said he. "This town runs fur udders. An' this time I'm goin' where I won't git nailed."

And Clancy and Kid are somewhere in Sonora now, getting along nicely, and living as honestly as Clancy had hoped to do in New York.

The Fake Hop Fiends.

The guests of the Maison de Shine are in the hall, at 5.30⁷/₄ P. M.

THE PROPERTY MAN—Say, ain't dinner near ready?

THE LANDLADY—Now, Mista Johnson, yuh folks kin suttently wait a minnit. Susy, I wisht yuh'd try tuh find out what that there strange odor is. What kin it be?

THE SOUBRETTE (sniffing the air)—It smells like joss sticks bein, burned, ef you ast me. When I was with the "The Burglar's Bride" comp'ny, we gells used 'em in the dressin' room, so the stage damager wouldn't catch us smokin' cigarettes.

LITTLE MINNIE MANGLE—I know, but I ain't goin' to tell. Mommer, I wanna fried negg fur my dinner. Kin I have it?

MRS. MANGLE—No, you can't. You jest eat what's set before you. Say, this stuff is getting worse. It was bad enough to be smelling that cooking cabbitch all day. It seems like the guests here gotter put up with plenty.

BIRDIE BARRINGTON (the vocalist; been in comic opera, and now in vaudeville)—I smelled it last night, coming up the air shaft. If it don't stop I shall leave. I ain't been in the habit of stoppin' at any but refined joints, and if one must be pestered this way I won't stand it.

THE MAGICIAN'S WIFE (wears black silk tights in the act and helps father with his props.)—Some

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folks seems to forgit that other parties can tell their real names. P'raps you don't remember when you was doin' sixteen shows a day with your first husband in a Butte honkatonk? Well, I do!

THE MAGICIAN (warningly)—Now, don't git in no battle with that dame. We're on the same bill and she can put in a knock with the house manager—I told you once he's stuck on her—and maybe have our act put in a bad spot.

BIRDIE BARRINGTON (haughtily)—Them low shoots is too fur below me fur me to reply. But I can lick you in a punch.

THE PROPERTY MAN (eagerly)—They're goin' to mix it up. The little un'll win out, see if she don't. My eye! dames is allus fightin'.

THE LANDLADY—Susy! Where are yuh? Have yuh traced it?

Boarders all commence sniffing curiously again.

THE SLAVEY (from above)—Nome, nothin' doin' up here! They ain't nobody in their rooms but the Brothers Pizzicatta, cleanin' their costumes with benzine. Tain't from that.

THE LANDLADY—Tell them boys they kinnot use no benzine in this house! What with me ketchin' 'em cookin' spaghetti on the gas an' tearin' up the bedspreads to use fur makeup towels, they're puttin' the place on the fritz!

(Door of "parlor bedroom" on ground floor opens, and a tall, palefaced man emerges. Immediately the strange odor increases).

THE PROPERTY MAN (edging close to newcomer)—Say, what you got on you? Smells awful funny.

CHARLIE GOTTEM (of Gottem & Dreem, rapid fire talking act. He gazes blankly at boarders)—Hello! Well, Mis' De Shine, we want to hire your whole second floor to-morrow. Just signed for ninety weeks at \$8,000 a week with Keith & Proctor, and unless we let Belasco star us we'll take it. Any one got

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change for a seven-dollar bill? Ah! I'll catch it yet! (He jumps at wall, clawing at large pink rose, part of the wall paper's design—then smiles foolishly).

Pretty, pretty!

THE LANDLADY—Just Heaving! is he crazy? Mista Johnson, promise yuh won't leave me alone with no loonatic!

THE PROPERTY MAN (chuckling)—He's got it bad. The Willies, I guess

THE SOUBRETTE (mysteriously)—I see it all now. It ain't licker ails him at all. It's hop!

THE LANDLADY (agitated)—My Gawd, Stella, whadda yuh mean?

MRS. MANGLE—Opium! John Mangle, this is no place for our child!

MR. MANGLE (deeply interested)—You take her upstairs. I may be needed here.

LITTLE MINNIE MANGLE—I knowed it all the time, 'cause I seen their pipe! I wanna be a hop-fiend, like Mister Gottem, mommer! Kin I?

(Door opens, and Harry Dreem, the other half of the act, comes out. Inside the room is full of smoke. An opium layout is on the floor.)

THE LANDLADY—Call the waggin'! I'm goin' tuh have these wretches pinched fur defilin' a Christian home with that there horrid stuff!

MR. DREEM (addressing her)—Kin'ly move your foot, madame. You are standing on fifteen thousand dollars and I want to use it to buy another shell.

MR. GOTTEM (uncertainly)—Lemme take a thousand. (The partners, in pantomime, go through act of handing and receiving phantom money.)

THE PROPERTY MAN—Fine for you, Maggie. I ast for the first floor front, an' you said nix, but you let a coupla dopes have it.

THE LANDLADY (weeping)—Oh, I done wrong; I know it now. Didn't they say they had three hundred comin' Satiddy, an' one was Emp'ror Wil-lum's nevvv, but fur me not tuh say so, account of

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gett'n' the Emp sore, an' they been stallin' every day about their board!

MR. GOTTEM (loudly)—Hey, call the Chink and let's smoke up!

ALL THE BOARDERS—This in an outrage!

THE MAGICIAN—Looks like dinner's ready. Let's eat, anyway.

(The slavery opens dining-room door, clanging bell, although tableful is in front of her.)

THE LANDLADY—Oh, I ast of fate, what more blows in a-goin' tuh fall on a pore lone woman? Here! Get outa this house, yuh ruffians! Never mind the bill!

MR. GOTTEM (suddenly losing foolish air, grabs grip from behind door)—Come on, Harry!

MR. DREEM—I'm with you, bo; hustle along! (They rush out front door.) Say, I guess that was bad, cookin' two bits' worth of dope on that old prop pipe and losin' a \$30 board bill! They hasten up street, laughing merrily.)

THE PROPERTY MAN (looking at pipe)—Hully gee! this is my prop I had in "King of the Hopfiends"!

THE LANDLADY—Stung again! Oh, I wisht I was in my grave!

Roosevelt Has a Christmas Party

Minus the usual features of all really, truly mining camp celebrations.

ROOSEVELT's bad man was doing his washing and cleaning up camp generally. He routed out a nest of pink-bellied woodrats which had made a cosy home among his pack saddles, cached for the winter under the little, snow-banked tent which held his grub, pack ropes and prospecting tools. The rats fled, squealing, when he poked at them with the axe handle. Shakespeare, the tailless "husky," who shared the bad man's fortunes, finished them off quickly.

"Gettin' sort of hungry, Shake?" asked the bad man, whose regular name was Buck.

Shake was always hungry, so Buck got out the bacon, mixed up a bannock, filled the coffee pot from a tin bucket of melted snow water, then put a chunk of wood into the dinky sheet iron stove.

"Well, cleaned up till spring, now," he remarked, casting an eye on four blue shirts and a motley array of patched underwear and woollen socks which hung on nails, drying. "We'll eat an' then santer downtown," went on Buck. "How 'bout you?" He flipped the cooking bannock ("baking powder brand") up in the air, squinted at the coffee pot, and turned the thick slices of bacon.

Shakespeare barked in pleasant anticipation. When the meal was ready, Buck cleared a space on the table, its top of split logs laid flat side up, with an oilcloth covering, and set out a tin plate and cup. The husky had his cup of black, sweetened coffee, his bacon and bits of hot, doughy bannock, smeared with grease. Man and dog ate contentedly, Buck talking, Shake replying by whines and little friendly barks.

"Clean the tinware to-morrow," announced Buck. "No use 'bein' to blame ladylike 'bout this here housekeepin'. Want your shoes on?" Shake for answer rolled on the floor, elevating his paws. Buck got out a set of "shoes," made of round pieces of deerskin, with a hide string, which gathered the edges tight about the dog's ankles. In the fall, galloping after the woodchucks over the sharp slide rock had worn Shake's toenails to the quick, hence the shoes.

There was snow on the hills now, packed thirty feet high on the summits, but down in the narrow canyon, where Roosevelt's tents and cabins clustered, there was but little. Sometimes a sort of mongrel Chinook wind blew warmly down from the coast, melting the ice of the south hillsides temporarily. It was cold, but some of the gold prospects could still be worked by patient picking at the frozen ledges. It's a quartz country, up in the Idaho mountains, and every foot uncovered by the pioneers of Roosevelt, the new gold district, made more rosy the coming of spring, with its thousands of moneyed gold seekers, now making ready for the rush as soon as the trails were passable.

Meanwhile, the first comers staked out and finished their location work, chuckling as they thought of the easy marks whose gold was easier to nail than that hidden in the hills.

* * *

Thompson's saloon, a big tent mounted on a log foundation, was lively when Buck had tramped down the packed trail to the big camp. The gramophone, which old Tonopah Smith had packed in before snow got too deep on the summits for horses and mules to cross, was noisily playing a band record, while Thompson's customers whistled and sang, between drinks.

"Hullo, Buck," said Thompson. "Little 'skee fur you-all?" Buck allowed that would suit him nicely. Shakespeare went to sleep under the log bar with Injun Bill's sheep dog and the setter owned by "Doc," the camp's lawyer.

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There's plenty of money in even a poor camp for the man of law, for disputes over locations and endless complications give him business all the time. Doc was prosperous.

Buck was deputy recorder. He got \$2 for every claim for which he gave out a certificate; consequently he had money. He wasn't a really ferocious bad man, but they had none badder in Snowslide. So Buck held the honor, although Thunder Mountain Brown covered it. But he was more easily bluffed than Buck, a small, scrubby-mustached man, who lugged a big navy .45 about, assuming in company a gruff, loud tone which made Shakespeare sigh wearily and go to sleep. Shake preferred the lower voice in which Buck conversed at home.

Buck "bought" all around, and everybody grew even more sociable.

"I wish I had a Peory, Ill., paper, that's sure," lamented the assayer, who thirsted for home news. Tonopah Smith was privately examining a bit of paper. "Do you guys know what the date is?" he inquired.

"'Bout time to take a drink, that's whar my knowin'-ness ends," observed Doc, amiably. "Set 'em up, Thomp, an' have one yourself. It'll give us confidence to see you lickin' up your own snakewater, which sure holds the record for bum whisky."

"Contrary minded say 'No,'" put in Buck, gayly. Thompson didn't mind such jests, and anyway, it was quite true.

"To-morrer," said Tonopah, impressively, "is Christmas! And us slobs didn't even know it! Why, when I was on the Sacramento River in '50 we allus celebrated holidays."

"Shut up!" "Choke him!" yelled Tonopah's friends, who had listened too often to his tales of '49.

"Well, gimme a drink, then," said he, peaceably. "But ain't this prairie dawg camp a-goin' to do nothin'?" Doc, whose word was considered fairly trustworthy, got out his own calendar and declared that for once Tonopah had

spoken truth. Doc grew sentimental and made a speech, but Buck cut in on it.

"You've read them tales of the gloomy group of lonely miners findin' the freezin' enfant, an' fram'in' it up a Christmas tree, I suspect," he remarked. "But we ain't got any enfant, nor no skirts of no kind, an' we ain't so dretful gloomy, long's the booze holds out. I vote we have doin's, an' cut up quite some. We must be gay."

"Oh, you ain't said a thing, Buck!" retorted Tonopah. "What kind of doin's kin we have what ain't been did?"

"That's got to be doped out," replied Buck. "We could get up a dinner, and a vodeville show to follow. An' you kin be the leadin' lady."

"There ain't no female clothes in camp!" exclaimed Tonopah, impatiently. "I ain't goin' piroutin' around less'n I'm dressed ki-rect. See?"

Orville, Johnson Thompson's Chicago barkeep, suddenly spoke. "There's a bunch of clothes up at the Sunny-side cabin," said he. "Came in with their supplies, when Jim Mason thought his wife was coming in. Jim's down at Warren, and we could get 'em easy."

Henry Weber, from Cripple Creek, favored the plan, but young Jim Jewell objected. "It ain't right to go bustin' into people's packs," said he. "Tell you what I wish. If I had my old Nig here, I'd do some fancy ridin'."

"What, that old black cayuse, with one eye?" sneered Buck. "Now, if you undertook to break my three-year-old mule, what I win from that Salt Lake guy, that'd be something to make a brag on!"

Doc spoiled what every one had hoped would be a cheerful scrap if properly worked up.

"It's a lot of use hollering about 'em, when they're fifty miles off, on the South Fork of Salmon, or on Winter range, gents," he observed, contemptuously. "Now, no personal arguments can be tolerated around this camp at present. All and sundry got to pitch in and frame up the big thing."

"Can't do nothin' till we wet up all 'round, boys," sug-

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gested Injun Billy. "On me, Thomp. Say, Thomp, how much booze you got, anyway? Mebbe there won't be enough."

This was a calamity upon which none had wasted a thought, and an anxious chorus instantly entreated Thompson to tell the worst at once.

He grinned reassuringly. "Seein' as I had a forty-mule pack train loaded with lick'er kegs come in just before the trails closed, you ain't got no cause to worry," he said, amiably. "That part's O. K. This is on the house. Ain't you goin' to appoint a committee on entertainment?"

"Sure," and Doc counted noses at once, selecting various citizens, who made jestful sallies in answer to their names as he called them off. It was further decided that as they had all winter to drowse in, sleep would be cut out for this night. The committee of ten were to arrange matters, while the rest were to foster the festive spirit and contribute anything needful from their outfits. Tonopah, even before the committee began work, had acquired a fair amount of the demon rum under his belt, and he was ready for anything by the time he, with Buck and Injun Billy, had floundered up through the snow to the Sunnyside cabin on Mule Creek. Lanterns there were none in Roosevelt in the early days of 1901, for glass won't ride well over steep mountain trails, but of candles, more precious than a string of pearls, there was a scanty hoard. Injun Billy carried one to light their way, flickering in a wooden box, the light turned from the wind. A pack done up in a saddle blanket yielded female garments of some sort, which Buck took charge of. Tonopah saved a lot of work by sliding home in foolish drunken fashion, with Injun Billy prodding him gleefully as Tonopah burrowed in the snow. They halted at Doc's tent on the east side of frozen Monumental Creek, which split Roosevelt in two, and joined the committee. Tonopah was weeping sadly, the tears freezing as they fell, because they couldn't find any child to succor.

"What that old prairie dog sniffing about?" demanded

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Doc. "Here, let up, Tonopah! What in Billy-be-dam ails you?"

"Him saying about us havin' no enfant to find layin' in the snow. We ain't a reg'lar camp, nohow!" bleated Tonopah.

"Put him off the committee!" cried Injun Billy. "Darned old cuss, he's just been a cryin' and a cussin' all the way. I'll give him a punch in the nose!"

"G'wan to sleep, Tonopah, you're bughouse," advised Buck, so Tonopah bunked down on Doc's blankets, where he soon snorted in disturbed slumber. Any one could see he was no man for a committee.

They settled to serious work, by the light of a candle. This was a serious affair.

* * *

The dinner was first, and all hands were busy at it. Injun Billy had been holding out a can of cocoa for three months; also he had a two-pound can of butter, a luxury possessed by no other gentleman there. Billy was making cornstarch puddings, flavoring them with the cocoa and lots of sugar. He had no milk, so he used snow water, and cooked relays of pudding in two small pails.

Early in the day he had stolen into the disreputable Tonopah's tent in search of the biggest bucket in camp, which the old sinner owned, but the assayer, who had a venison stew to prepare, had beaten him to it.

They clinched in a furious embrace when Billy endeavored to wrest the bucket from the assayer, and the latter came out of it with a tooth or so loose, but he had the bucket, and flew joyously back to his big log fire, where Buck was riding herd on all the Dutch ovens in camp, filled with baking bannocks. "Gimme your gun, old pal," panted the assayer. "Doggone him, he don't cook any pudding in this, and me with a whole three-year-old buck to stew up. Blame his Injun hide!"

Billy came whooping down the trail! "Whee-ee! I'm a comin'! Make way for the Roosevelt express!" Just then he stubbed his toe, landing in the midst of Buck's

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flock of ovens, whereupon their guardian rapped Billy smartly on the head with his gun butt, sternly commanding him to arise and vamoose. Billy vamoosed, hustling back to his puddings. Forty-two tin cans were to be filled for as many stomachs yearning for sweet stuff. It seemed hopeless, but fortified by a large drink, he cooked and stirred and tasted, setting the completed ones out in a snowbank to harden.

Young Jim Jewell was mixing dumplings for the assayer's stew by the big fire, clumsily stirring it with a stick, his wool mittens preventing a really graceful performance. Thunder Mountain Williams was not very sober, but he could navigate, so the committee set him on guard to watch the dried prunes and apricots, peaches and apples, the miner's standby. They bubbled pleasantly as he solemnly watched. Once he fell into the fire, but Orville, the barkeep, who was slicing bacon and thawing out a big piece of elk meat, rescued him, and Williams resumed his scrutiny of the fruit pails.

With flour at \$16 a 100 pounds, it was no cheap Christmas dinner. Each man brought his own dishes, crowding them on Thompson's bar and in any vacant space inside the saloon.

It began to snow outside, a little at first, then faster, until the wind whipping it wetly into his face awoke the startled Williams, asleep at the switch, with the smell of crackling, burning apricots ascending to the gray winter sky. Guiltily, he thrust the stinking apricots into a drift of snow, hastening to drop a chunk of it into the remaining pails, saved just in time.

Buck fired his .45 three times; that was the signal. Bearing pots and pails, steaming armfuls of bread and battered pails of coffee, the camp came shouting into Thompson's. Orville set out dozens of little thick glasses, an appetizer contributed by "the house." Injun Billy, covered with snow, came in with the last bunch of canned pudding. He set a square can in front of the assayer, whose lip was swollen horribly. "Have some butter?" he

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asked politely. The assayer was overcome by such decent treatment.

"You're a prince, Bill!" he cried enthusiastically. "Give us your mitt! Butter!" Billy stood back modestly, while the camp bowed to the man who owned a can of yellow delight such as folks ate in "the States." A hundred and fifty miles from a wagon road was Roosevelt then, and it was a tough trail in warm weather. Winters, a man packed his grub on his back, and went without blankets, or vice versa.

"Read the manyoo, Orville!" ordered Thompson, gayly. Orville had made up the menu, because Doc said at all swell feeds you had one.

Buck was serving out small dabs of the lonely salmon, brought up from the big river by young Jewell, after he had put his pack horses down on their range. There was a mushy bit of potato for each, the last of a tin of this useful vegetable (evaporated).

"Poisin a lay Jimmy Jewell, with pommes a lay can!" shouted Orville.

"What in Sam Hill should we say?" whispered Williams, hurriedly. He was unused to gatherings of such elegance.

"Let the bet go as it lays, then!" roared Buck.

"Well, now you got to eat it," said Orville. Every man took his in one bite, then forty-one spoons beat upon forty-one tin plates. Ed Carpenter, the mining expert from Wilkesbarre, was observed by Doc as he choked in an effort to suppress his mirth. Doc winked expressively at him, then turned an earnest gaze on the diners.

"Caffy ah lay—go on and pour it out. It ain't 'lay,' but we can't think of French for black," explained Orville, and proceeded. "Just plain beans, Thunder Mountain, and cochon saute."

"What kin that be?" wondered Injun Billy. It was the bacon which Henry Webber had spent a couple of hours in frying. With it was rice, and hot bannock, with a little chunk of butter all around. Carpenter, who had bossed the beans, snickered aloud, drawing upon himself

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a frown from Williams, who was intensely interested in this refined meal.

"Venison, reg'lar fried kind, and deer meat a lay Auditorium." went on Orville, putting in a plug for his home town. "Chocolate fancy pudding a lay Injun Billy, and all the rest of the chuck in the Salmon River Mountains! And who wants a drink?"

"Bully for you, Orville! Here's how!" shouted the crowd, and dinner began again. There were speeches, and, of course, a song or two. The gramophone squawked out tune after tune. Everybody bought drinks, and feasted, and bought again. The candles were lighted, recklessly disregarding how many were burned. Thompson ripped off "block" matches, and the gloom fled before the cheerful flames.

And where was Tonopah Smith? It occurred to various revellers at once that Tonopah was absent. Buck took Shakespeare and searched the camp. Tonopah had disappeared, nor did Injun Billy, who could trail anything, find sign of him. The snow was very heavy and there was no means of locating him by ordinary means. They made ready for the vaudeville show, but in a worried way.

"Where can the old sardine be?" asked Buck, generally. No one knew. Shakespeare and the assayer's dog barked excitedly, the door opened, and Tonopah fell in.

"Santy Claus is here," yelled Thompson, but Tonopah was down and out. Doc and Young Jewell lifted him up. There was a bundle under one arm, and it growled angrily, struggling in the worn saddle blanket, in which it was wrapped. "The child," muttered Tonopah, stupidly. "Here he is, lil' angel. Found him cryin' in snow."

"Child, nothin'!" howled Injun Billy, leaping at the bundle. "It's my dog Sport! Hi, Sport!"

Tonopah's "child" barked wildly, and broke loose from its savior.

Tonopah was in no condition to partake of more fire-water, but when he thawed out a bit he sat up and imbibed with the rest.

The vaudeville show commenced, with Buck and Doc,

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clad in two very tight woollen skirts, red sweaters and sombreros with spruce twigs for garniture, doing a song and dance as a sister team, to the gramophone's strident notes. They elevated their skirts to a most unwomanly height, and made goo-goo eyes in the most approved style. Some of the \$16 a hundred flour did duty as powder, the whisky had flushed their damask cheeks enough to make rouge unnecessary.

"Why don't you throw dollars on the stage to us wimmen?" demanded Buck of the audience.

"'Cause you're bum," returned a critical spectator, cruelly. Orville was next with a ballad. He sang "The Good Old Summer Time," probably because it was winter. A quartette obliged with various good old airs, and the camp joined in. The show got all mixed up with the audience, who waltzed about aimlessly, shouting "The Star Spangled Banner" in patriotic frenzy. The "doings" ended with a grand promenade up the trail through the blinding snow, then down it, every one singing, and Tonopah lugging Injun Billy's dog, who yelped furiously and bit Tonopah upon the chin. Buck fired his gun; the echoes came back. Every gun in camp boomed out noisily, the dogs barked, their owners yelled.

"Yip-yip! Yip-yip! Let's get a drink!" shrieked Doc, from the snowdrift where Buck and the assayer were rolling him.

"Goes with me! Come on! It's Christmas only once a year, boys! Open house till 4 o'clock, and then vamoose to bed!" It was Thompson, standing in his door.

There was a last cheer, and Roosevelt went inside to finish up its Christmas. "Nobody ain't got nothin' on us fur celebratin'," said Tonopah, drunkenly. "S'good as forty-nine!"

Nat M. Wills and the "Hairless Mystery."

Nat M. Wills who is starring in "A Lucky Dog" this season, invited Mrs. Sheehan, the sister of his old time partner, Dave Halpin, to a dress rehearsal in the early fall. "Like it?" he inquired.

"Oh, its great," said Mrs. Sheehan, with a smile and added "Do you remember the hairless mystery?" Wills began to snicker. "I wouldn't be so ungrateful as to forget the good beast," he replied, "but it takes me back a few years."

Wills and Halpin were doing an act called "The Copper and the Tramp." It was'nt "vaudeville" in those days, but plain "variety." If they had luck, they rode on the trains, and if not, under them. Halpin was celebrated for the manner in which he got his trunk from one jump to another. Even Nat was unable to discover how he did it, but the trunk always came along.

They reached Salt Lake on a Saturday via the brakebeams from Cheyenne, broke. Sunday the team opened at Sackett's Museum, at a salary of \$30 for two. Nat knew a barkeeper who hailed from the East, and the friendly fellow, when they located him at the "The Senate" bar, staked them to a dollar. They fed frugally, with an eye out for the hungry morrow. Dave also knew a man, and while he went off to hunt the victim, Nat adventured into a gambling house. Before he emerged, the half dollar had been played into nineteen.

Joyously, he started for the corner where Dave

was to be, and on the way, he met a much intoxicated gent, carrying, under one arm a wierd little animal. which barked shrilly and protestingly. Nat had generously decided to buy Dave a present. The week before, Dave had blown him to six collars. This was the place to return the courtesy, and as he walked along, he had searched the windows.

"What's wrong with the mutt?" he inquired curiously. The man said thickly that this was no mutt. It had never had any hair, being a hairless dog. Nat was interested. He had never before sighted a Chihuahua. Would not Dave be equally pleased with this queer creature?

"Sell it for two bucks," said the drunken person temptingly. Nat bought it. It should be their pet, because any one knows what a lonely life it is, chasing over the country, homeless. "If Halpin can get a trunk through, he surely can fix the dog—its so much smaller," he reflected sagely.

Dave did not chide his partner. Instead, he approved of the purchase. They hired a room, provided delicacies for the hairless one, and fed him until. stuffed, he rolled upon one side and slept.

Before their first show, every performer in the museum, and the freaks, had seen the hairless dog.

The pianist went behind especially to look doggie over. The treasure had been named Sackett, in the fond hope that the boss might feel flattered enough to give them a return contract.

"We got McNulty's Hairless Mystery here next week," remarked the stage manager. "Ever seen it? Horse with no hair." The freak horse was featured in large type on the 3-sheets, as the "extra attraction." On the way home, between shows. of which they did six a day, they stopped to gaze at the advance billing of the remarkable animal.

"Laying off a week before Grand Rap'ds is going to be tough. and us needing clothes," observed Dave. "Wonder if they ever play a turn two weeks at that

joint?" Nat didn't think they did. "We'll have to live pretty close to the cushion," said he, "but we can slide through."

They closed on Saturday night. Sunday the new show opened, and being entitled to the courtesies of the house, they went to see it. Recollecting that he had left a stick of grease paint in a secret place, Nat made his way "in back," in search of it. All was excitement on the stage. "What's coming off?" he asked.

"The blame hairless horse won't come up," shouted the manager, adding angrily to McNulty, the owner—"Say, you got to get him on this stage!"

"I'm trying to," yelled McNulty desperately; "he went up worser ones in K. C. an' Saint Looey." Nat whistled to himself as if struck by an idea. "Can I see you a minute?" he asked eagerly, "now you're got to replace this act if the horse renegs on it, haven't you?"

The proprietor admitted that it looked that way. "Well," began Nat boldly, "you've got a hairless mystery advertised? Supposing I furnish you with one?"

"Oh, don't talk foolish," said the boss peevishly, "where you going to get one?"

"We've got that hairless dog, and he's a wonder all right," answered Nat, "we can frame him up in great shape, and with me to do some comedy, there's your answer." The boss reflected. "How much for the act?" he asked. Nat resolved to get all he could. "Thirty for the single turn," he said. It was a lot of money, but the audience out front, was even now uneasy, manifesting its distaste at the long wait by stamping and clapping.

"If Halpin will go on as the skeleton dude its a bet," was Sackett's final offer; "I'm in a hole, and you ought not to soak me."

"He'll do it. but of course we do our regular act, too. Thirty-five for us." Sackett retorted angrily. He had Al Leach and others doing a tabloid produc-

tion of "Pinafore" downstairs, and two comedy turns already. Nat would not listen.

"They raisin' a yell for the mystery," exclaimed the stage manager, "shall I go make a talk?"

"No!" shouted Sackett angrily, "it'll crab the show. I'll give you people fifty-five, you and the dog as a single, Halpin as the skeleton, and you close the show with your regular act." Nat agreed. It was a fortune. Dave would make a satisfactory skeleton, for he was of a lathlike slimness at that time. Luckily, their wardrobe was still at the theatre. It had been scheduled to be sent to their room during the afternoon. Dave himself, bearing the "mystery," which had been seized with a violent fit of trembling, in the crook of his arm, wandered behind the scenes to ascertain the cause of the delay in raising the drop. He grinned delightedly when told of the splendid bargain Nat had made.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the manager from the stage, "I am introducing to your notice to-day McNulty's Hairless Mystery, the wonder of the ages! Science is baffled by it! Europe has marvelled at—" he paused, casting a hasty look at the first entrance in which Nat was waiting his cue, with "Sackett" ready. He had no time to procure a costume suitable to a dog trainer, so appeared in his street clothes. "Europe," proceeded Sackett sonorously, "has marvelled at it. Thanking you one and all for your kind attention, yours truly."

He retired. The audience buzzed expectantly. What were they to see? A "grip" carried a gilt-chair on the stage. The pianist played a dreamy waltz, and Nat and the Hairless Mystery appeared. The latter was so tiny that at first the spectators still gazed at the wings.

"Jump!" commanded Nat loudly. Sackett emitted a shrill squeak, but he did not obey. Nat put him on the chair, where he whined entreatingly. Some one hissed, but Nat, after holding up the shivering mys-

NAT M. WILLS AND "HAIRLESS MYSTERY."

tery, suddenly began to sing a parody. They laughed then. He improvised a line of monologue, with the hairless one as the target, and the act was the hit of the bill. It brought the people in all week, and when Halpin and Wills, with the Mystery, left for their next date, they were affluent. Sackett even offered another week, but the Mystery was honorably and permanently retired from public life.

Their First Night in a Sleeper.

LOUISA and Martha had never adventured upon a sleeping car before. They timidly followed the porter, each bearing a large assortment of packages and wraps and sank into their seat, uttering exclamations of wonder and pleasure. They observed the shiny woodwork and green velvet, and commented upon it admiringly.

They spread their outfit carefully upon the opposite seat, wiggled about until they were comfortably fixed, and opened the box of lunch. Then Abdallah Ben Hamidi, boss of the "Arabian Whirlwinds," strolled in from the smoker. He had the lower berth in the section of which Martha had confidently accepted the upper from a mean ticket clerk.

He was large, and swarthy, with a huge diamond horseshoe in his tie. But he was polite. "Ver' mooch bad, but no can help," said he apologetically, "train he mooch peop' on board, so I haf' set in my seat. S'cuse."

Martha and Louisa, like two frightened elderly sparrows, twittered and twisted uneasily in their confusion. They gathered up the lunch, and dropped it, and Abdallah collected the oranges and cake, and helped them rearrange their camp.

"Ees my luck," he reflected, "where they goin' sleep? No can bunk up top, two wimmens. But 'tain't my fault. I read pape' and pretend no see." He hid behind his newspaper.

Louisa and Martha sat across from him, holding each other's hands, in agony lest their respectable feet should knock against the big, shiny shoes of this

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frightening man. The train lurched drunkenly rounding a curve, and Martha did a stunt like the circus lady's through the paper hoops, as she shot forward, her shamed head bursting through the Arabian gentleman's paper.

"Oh, Lousia!" she cried, unhappily. "That ain't nothing, not bit!" said Abdallah, soothingly, but he only added to their embarrassment. Abdallah dug up another paper. He couldn't read English, but they didn't know it. They sat in silence, until Martha began to wonder where they were to sleep? It was a sleeping car, but where were the beds?

They consulted and whispered. Finally Martha made an unsteady way to the end, where a bit of the porter's white jacket showed. She was pale and agitated when she returned. "We sleep in these," she said. "Oh, sister! And this man is in it, too! What shall we do?"

They were overcome with horror. How did you sleep in them, and surely, surely, a soulless corporation, as they had heard the railroad called on the Evening Guff's back page, would not force two refined ladies of the best old Dutch blood of Pennsylvania, to—delicacy prevented them from saying it.

Abdallah, opposite, eyed them over the paper. What were these little ladies gabbing about? "Ees goin' be beeg crowd with all of us, hey?" he remarked pleasantly, a moment later, innocently. He felt that they needed cheer. "I got lil' bot' arrack, ver' fine, no get in America, 'tall. You lak' lil' dreenk, mak' you feel fine," he added. They worried him.

For answer, Martha and Louisa arose and fled, leaving the lunch and packages behind. The man drank! And he spoke gayly of—oh, they couldn't say it! Blushing, they bore down upon the porter, and demanded, in the name of Heaven, his protection. "Dat gemmen doan' mean nuffin', ladys," he replied, "but Ah'll go wif' vo, an s'plain bote de berfs. Yo' all doan understan'."

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Reinforced by the porter, the ladies went back. Abdallah was mad now, and he did not even look at them. "Ees beeg fool," said he privately to the porter, who nodded. The two men across the way grinned at Abdallah, and the one ahead peeped over his seat and winked knowingly.

When publicly questioned by the porter. Martha admitted that they would like to retire. They were quite desperate. How one could decently disrobe and prepare for rest in this place seemed a mystery. The porter solved it by making up both berths. The two men invited Abdallah to join them until he wanted to go to bed, and the ladies sat gingerly waiting in another section.

"Ready!" called the porter, fetching his "steps."

"Never, no, never!" cried Louisa shrilly. She said they could not climb up in front of those men. The porter screened them with the heavy curtains, and Martha took a chance. She arrived safely, and Louisa hoisted up the lunch, wraps, bags and bundles.

Somehow she also got up.

But the bags took up all the room! They sat, cross-legged, in the midst of their belongings, emitting hopeless squeals. Abdallah relented. Being tall, he calmly pulled aside their curtains, and gesticulated with his bag, ringed hand.

Martha screeched for help. Why had they ever begun this terrible trip?

"You tak' my bed an' I come up here, see?" said Abdallah gently. "Come, lil' birds, don' be mak' such a noise!"

Subdued snorts came from all around, as the passengers endeavored to conceal their mirth. "Help! help! help!" shrieked Martha. The two men got up. The tallest one begged her to be calm. He said he had four children at home, and a wife—they could trust him. The dark gentleman was only trying to assist them, and if they would come down, all would be well.

Abdallah retreated, puzzled by these strange women. Finally Martha and Louisa settled in the lower berth.

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Their heads could be heard bumping against the top, and Martha said she would pin the money inside her corset. Then removing this useful garment—the process was quite audible—she found that wouldn't do. Louisa said hesitatingly that Cousin 'Melia carried hers in her stocking, but Martha, shocked, said they would remain ladies, even if robbers secured all their valuables.

They cackled and fretted, and Louisa wound the clock, which was in one of the bundles. The porter came through. "Telegram for John P. Smith!" he shouted. Mr. Smith claimed it. Martha and Louisa awoke. How could a man get a telegram on a moving train?

And suppose this was the wrong train, and they wouldn't get there after all? And 'Melia's husband might not be at the station! Abdallah, in the berth above, cursed low in Arabic.

"Ee'll be there, quit mak sooch a fuss!" He shouted finally. There was quiet. They were quaking, fearing for their lives. Perhaps he carried a knife. A trainman went past outside at a stop with a flaming torch, which he thrust under the train. Certain that it was on fire, Martha and Louise arose.

The two men opposite woke up, and came forth in their flannel nightshirts. John P. Smith, in his blue pajamas. Abdallah in his silk ones, looking out from above. and the porter, all united to lull the fright of the ladies.

At five, their usual hour of rising when at home, they got up, and, willy n'illy, Abdallah had to get up too, because there wasn't any place for the ladies to sit unless he did.

Martha and Louisa left the train at nine o'clock, and 'Melia's husband was waiting on the platform. Louisa pressed a nickel into the porter's hand. "Don't you spend it on rum, will you?" she said, pleadingly.

"Mak' up my berth again," ordered Abdallah, wearily. "I'm goin' sleep all day."

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